

# THE GĪTĀBHĀŚYA

OF

RĀMĀNUJA

*Translated Into English*

*by*

M R SAMPATKUMARAN, MA

ĀRYA INDOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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**SRI S. K. SOMANI**

*In grateful appreciation of the  
continued assistance, co-operation and inspiration*



## FORWARD

The work of reprinting *Gitābhāṣya* by Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran was undertaken sometime in September, 1981. Prof. Sampatkumaran who was in our midst then agreed very kindly, to allow us to reprint this book. Unfortunately, immediately after finalizing about the reprinting, he left this mundane world for his heavenly abode. As we place this edition in the hands of readers, we feel grateful to God for enabling us to fulfill the late Prof. Sampatkumaran's wish.

We place on record our sincere thanks to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and also the Sundaram Charities for their fine gesture in extending the necessary financial assistance, without which, we would not have been in a position to bring out this edition.

The diacritical marks in this books are a carry over from the earlier edition. No attempt was made to rewrite the Sanskrit words and names uniformly as internationally accepted diacritical marks.

We also express our thanks to the staff members of the Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute for their assistance and Dr. Mrs. Chapekar for going through the proofs very carefully.

Our sincere thanks to M/s. Hoe & Co, Madras, which has neatly printed the work.

K. K. A. VENKATACHARI  
(*Founder Director*)

*29th March, 1985*



## PREFACE

The story of how I came to undertake this translation of Śrī Rāmānuja's *Gītābhāṣya* into English goes back more than a score of years. In 1948 or so, my good friend, Śrī M. B. Narasimha Iyengar of Bangalore, informed me that a publisher was interested in bringing out an English translation of the *Rāmānuja-bhāṣya* on the *Gītā*. We knew of course that no such translation was then available in print. A. Govindacharya's rendering, published towards the end of the last century, had been long out of print. The translation by G. G. Narasimhacharya had appeared serially in the philosophical journal, *The Brahmanvādin*, to which he was a frequent contributor. But it had never been brought out in book-form.

I suggested to my friend that he bring to the notice of the publisher the latter work, which had impressed me in some instalments I had seen as having been written with clarity and some elegance. This was done, and the publisher expressed the intention to take up its printing soon. I undertook to secure the translation and to edit it with a few footnotes and an introduction, indenting on Śrī Narasimha Iyengar's scholarship all the while.

The late Śrī R. A. Srirangarajan, a cousin of G. G. Narasimhacharya, gave me an incomplete interleaved copy of the extracts of the translation collected from the issues of the *Brahmanvādin*. I started editing according to plan. But soon afterwards the publisher lost interest in the book, and I laid aside the work.

Many years later, an opportunity came to me to study the *Gītābhāṣya* with the *Tātparyachandrikā* of Śrī Vedānta Deśika under Śrī Kāraṇṇādu Veṅkaṭāchārya Svāmīn who was kind enough to take pains to explain to me the subtleties and nuances of the issues discussed. It then struck me that a fresh translation of the *Gītābhāṣya*, closely following the *Chandrikā*, might serve a real need. This work is the result. I cannot say how far I have succeeded in my objective. All that I can claim is that I have attempted, to the best of my ability, to perform the task. The translation endeavours to be as clear as possible, without straying far from the original.

I have ventured also to draw attention in a number of places to the interpretations given by other leading commentators in the belief that these might clarify Śrī Rāmānuja's own exposition and help to place it in its historical setting. The listing of variant readings and the transcribing of additional *śloka*s accepted by certain commentators may also contribute to this. The translation of the *Gitārthasaṅgraha* given as an appendix will demonstrate how closely that work has been followed in the *bhāṣya*. The footnotes are mostly inspired by the *Chandrikā*, though a few deal with points not raised in it.

The table of transliteration shows how Sanskrit words have been printed in the Roman script. The word, 'karman', has been given in the familiar form of 'karma' throughout. The terms, 'Ātman' and 'Brahman', are used to mean the Universal Self at some place and the individual self at others. The distinction is indicated by translating them as 'Self' and 'self' respectively.

It remains for me only to thank all those who have helped me in this arduous undertaking. It was the work of Śrī G. G. Narasimha-charya, who was at one time closely associated with Swami Vivekananda and who also happened to be my mother's cousin, that started me. Śrī Kārappaṅgādu Venkaṭāchārya Svāmī placed all the resources of his wide erudition at my disposal. A grant from the Ministry of Education, Government of India, will help me to defray a considerable part of the cost of printing. Śrī M. C. Krishnan was diligent in seeing the work through the press. Śrī R. C. Srinivasaraghavan helped me to prepare the indexes and the Errata. My colleagues in the trust in memory of my father were kind enough to agree to this work being published in its name. To all these I am indebted in various ways, and I gladly offer them my thanks.

June, 1939

—M. R. S.



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## INTRODUCTION

Śrī Rāmānuja is believed to have written nine works. These are (i) *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*, a concise statement of the philosophical doctrines of the *Vedas*, with special reference to important passages in the *Upaniṣads*; (ii) *Vedānta-sāra*, a very brief commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, (iii) *Vedānta-dīpa* ('lamp of the *Vedānta*') a longer commentary, but still brief, on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*; (iv) *Śrībhāṣya* ('the beautiful commentary'), a fairly comprehensive commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras* which systematically refutes all schools of thought, heterodox as well as orthodox, other than *Vaiśeṣādvaita*, and forms the *locus classicus* on this particular branch of *Vedānta*, (v) *Śaranāgati-gadya*, a prayer in poetic prose, based on unbounded faith in the Lord's grace and describing complete surrender to His will; (vi) *Śrīraṅga-gadya*, another prayer in poetic prose, describing the famous shrine at Śrīraṅga and the gracious presence of the Lord there as an icon; (vii) *Śrī-vaṅkuṭṭha-gadya*, yet another prose poem, describing the glories of Heaven and the beatitude of salvation, (viii) *Gītā-bhāṣya*, a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*; and (ix) *Nīya*, a manual of everyday worship and devotion.

The order of composition of these works is not known. But one or two facts concerning this matter stand out distinctly. Śrī Rāmānuja specifically refers to the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* more than once in the course of the *Śrībhāṣya*. That makes the latter work posterior in point of time to the former. And what is more important for us here, we find that the greater part of the commentary on the *Gītā* (xiii. 2), identical with a passage in the *Śrībhāṣya* (I. i. 1) It is of some interest to see whether we can get a hint as to which is the earlier of the two

Our impression is that the passage which forms an integral part of a complicated series of arguments in the *Śrībhāṣya* is likely to have been taken over from there to the *Gītā-bhāṣya*. The discussion about the true purport of several *Śruti* passages while not entirely out of place in the commentary on the *Gītā*, is certainly more relevant to the context in the *Śrībhāṣya*, where the significance of the famous *Chāndogya* text, '*Tat tvam asi*' (That thou art), is under consideration. Moreover, two minor considerations seem to bear this out. Towards the end of the argument and before deprecating the length of the discussion, the *Śrībhāṣya* uses an analogy from the commandments

relating to new and full moon sacrifices from the *karmakāṇḍa* of the *Vedas*. This might well have been omitted in the commentary on the *Gītā* as being too technical. Secondly, it is significant that one passage from a later chapter of the *Gītā* which is quoted in the passage has its purport explained. This may be quite essential in a discussion of the *Brahma-sūtras*, but it is unnecessary in a commentary on the *Gītā* where the stanza will be explained in due course. This appears to be almost the only place in the *Gītā* where a stanza from a later chapter is explained in advance.

Dr J. A. van Buitenen in his Introduction to his *Rāmānuja on the 'Bhagavadgītā'* has arrived at the same conclusion, arguing on different grounds. He points out that, while quoting the *Vedānta-sūtras* in the commentary on the *Gītā*, Śrī Rāmānuja seldom seeks to define or establish their purport. "it is *a priori* improbable that Rāmānuja would have referred to the *Sūtras* in corroboration of his *Gītā* interpretations, if he had had no reason to consider these vital texts to be sufficiently known to his fellow-philosophers, only after composing the *bhāṣya* on the *Sūtras* he could refrain, as he does from commenting in detail on the *Sūtras* to which he refers." This is supported by "the amplified interpretations of the *Gītā-bhāṣya* where the interpretations of the *Śrībhāṣya* are enlarged upon, the implicit references to the *Śrībhāṣya* when *Sūtras* are quoted in direct corroboration of his *Gītā* commentary, and the *a priori* probability that the *Śrībhāṣya* as an epochmaking commentary on a vital *Vedānta* text, preceded the *Gītā-bhāṣya* in which moreover the most important *viśiṣṭādvaita* views, set forth in the *Śrībhāṣya*, are taken for granted."

## II

To Śrī Rāmānuja, as to other great *ācāryas*, the *Gītā* is an authoritative scripture, laying down tenets of faith and teaching ways of life and realisation. He interprets it of course from the standpoint of the philosophy of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, the non-dualism whose Supreme Principle is endowed with modes and attributes. The Lord, the individual selves and inert matter constitute a kind of complex, organic triune unity. Both individual souls and matter are the body of the Lord, who is the soul of all. Roughly, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* may be said to accept the position set out in the well-known couplet of Pope :

All are but parts of one Tremendous Whole,  
Whose body Nature is and God the soul.

Such being the case, the world is real and experience is not illusory. The Lord is free of the slightest trace of evil and is full of auspicious qualities like love, glory, power, beauty, etc. The sorrows and sufferings of the individual souls in the world are due to their own past *karmas*. Salvation is the state of freedom from all association with matter. It is a beatific state in which the soul enjoys unalloyed and never-ending happiness in the presence of the Lord, acquiring many of His divine qualities like omniscience, etc.

The means of salvation, as taught in Śrī Rāmānuja's commentaries on the *Vedānta-sūtras* and the *Gītā*, is primarily *bhakti* or loving devotion. *Prapatti* or self-surrender is also hinted at, and what this has meant for the later development of *Vaiṣṇāvism*, we shall see presently.

This system of thought came down to Śrī Rāmānuja from hoary tradition. In the *Śrībhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*, he refers to earlier thinkers of his school like Bodhāyana, Śaṅka, Damaṇḍa and others. More particularly, he learnt his lessons in philosophy and religion from the disciples of Śrī Yāmuna, who in turn had been inspired by the disciples of his grandfather, Nāthamuni.

So far as the commentary on the *Gītā* is concerned Śrī Rāmānuja is indebted to Śrī Yāmuna's *Gītārtha-saṅgraha*, which is given in an appendix to this volume. This is a short metrical treatise in 32 stanzas which analyses the *Gītā* chapter by chapter as well in groups of six chapters and as a whole. Śrī Vedānta Deśika in his commentary on the *Saṅgraha* declares that Śrī Yāmuna was taught by Rāmamiśra his grandfather's views on the *Gītā*. In view of the detailed analysis offered in the *Saṅgraha* which presupposes a settled interpretation of every stanza of the *Gītā*, this seems plausible. Moreover, Nāthamuni was, according to tradition, an adept in *yoga*; and both the *Śrībhāṣya* and the commentary on the *Gītā* treat the discipline of devotion as essentially a kind of *yoga*. It is to be noted that, according to the same tradition, the secret of his *yoga* could not be taught to his grandson through a mischance.

Śrī Rāmānuja takes up the scheme of the *Saṅgraha* and fills up the outline with competent consistency. His commentary starts with a stanza praising Śrī Yāmuna, and he proceeds to quote extensively the stanzas, words and phrases of the authoritative summary. There is nothing in his commentary which departs from the *Saṅgraha*, so far as can be seen. Any speculation that he varies the emphasis

here and there must remain pure guessing and nothing more. No doubt, some of the stanzas of the *Saṅgraha* may seem obscure without the basis of Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary and the explanations of Śrī Vedānta Deśika in the *Gītārtha-saṅgraha-rakṣā*. The latter is based on Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary and to some extent on oral tradition.

The *Saṅgraha* on which Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary is based puts forward views differing from many extant interpretations of the *Gītā*. Śrī Śaṅkara himself refers to many commentaries explaining the sacred text word by word and sentence by sentence and examining critically its import. In particular, the views of a *Vṛttikāra* on the *Gītā* he controverts here and there. Śrī Vedānta Deśika refers by name to Piśācha, Rantideva, Gupta, Śaṅkara, Yādavaprakāśa, Bhāskara, Nārāyaṇārya and Yajñasyāmin as authors of commentaries on the *Gītā*. Evidently, Śrī Rāmānuja's work had to make its way among these. But he has chosen to be expository rather than polemical in his *bhāṣya*, and that means that he has not referred to the views of previous writers except by implication. Śrī Yāmuna is the only writer whose views on the *Gītā* are specifically quoted by Śrī Rāmānuja.

### III

Writers on *Viśiṣṭādvaita* often try to review philosophical systems by an analysis of five topics, *artha-pañcaka*. These are the nature of God, the nature of the individual soul, the state of final emancipation and beatitude, that which prevents the souls from attaining this and the proper way of attainment and realisation. The teachings of the *Gītā*, as understood by Śrī Rāmānuja, are now briefly summed up under each of these heads.

According to Śrī Rāmānuja, the *Gītā* teaches a loving, personal God, full of all kinds of auspicious attributes. Unlike the *Upaṇiṣads*, some important texts of which have been understood by Śrī Śaṅkara as declaring the *Brahman* to be without attributes, the *Gītā* hardly refers to an Absolute standing outside the sphere of all relations. One argument advanced by the followers of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is that God is spoken of in the *Gītā* in all the seven or eight cases known to Sanskrit grammar. Here are a few examples of the nominative, accusative and other cases in order. The Lord, dwelling in the heart, causes each being, mounted on the machine of the body, to move through the workings of the *guṇas* of the *prakṛti* (XVIII. 61). To

cross beyond the *māyā*, one has to seek Him as refuge (VII. 14); when liberated from the bonds of *karma*, one attains Him (IX 28). By Him the world is pervaded (IX 4). Because Arjuna is dear to Kṛṣṇa, the latter speaks for his good (XVIII 65). There is none higher than Him (VII. 7). Many births of His has passed away, all of which He knows (IV. 5). One will live in Him alone, if one's attention is fixed on Him and one's will directed to Him (XII 8). These statements illustrating a somewhat scholastic argument are taken to indicate that God, according to the *Gītā*, is involved in all kinds of intimate relations with the world.

The central teaching of the *Gītā* about God, according to Śrī Rāmānuja, is that He is the soul of the universe. "I am the self, O Arjuna (Gudākeśa)," says Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "seated at the hearts of all creatures" (X 20). Earlier (VII 7), He has declared that the whole universe is strung on Him like gems in a necklace. This is made very clear by the statement that He has two *prakṛtis*, a higher and a lower. The latter consists of the material universe, while the souls which sustain the material universe, constitute the higher *prakṛti* of the Lord (VII. 4-5). Further support to this characteristic *viśiṣṭādvaitic* conception of the unity of the universe is found in Arjuna's description of the universal form of the Lord in XI 40. "You pervade all, therefore You are all."

In his commentary, Śrī Rāmānuja is never tired of calling attention to the auspicious qualities of the Lord. His beauty and His grace, His love and His mercy are stressed again and again. Commenting on the statement in VII. 18 that the man of wisdom among the four types of devotees is, in the Lord's own opinion. His soul, Śrī Rāmānuja explains that this means that the Lord cannot sustain Himself without such a devotee. Since what sustains one is one's soul, the devotee is the soul of the Lord. Differing from other commentators, he interprets X 10 in such a way as to bring out the affection with which the Lord bestows devotion on those who worship Him with a view to attain constant union with Him. Thus, Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary is throughout rich with the suggestion that the Lord is continually striving to win the struggling souls to salvation.

The stress laid on the Lord as the *antaryāman* or internal controller of all is, in *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, the basis for a wise toleration in religion and philosophy. In his commentaries on VII 21 and IX 23 and 25, Śrī Rāmānuja points out that the worship of every god or ghost or

goblin is ultimately the worship of the one God and that all modes of worship ultimately reach unto Him.

That the Lord has a form of His own is one of the important tenets of *Vaiṣṇādvaita*. Śrī Rāmānuja has frequently found occasion to describe aspects of this form in the course of his commentary. Of the form in the supreme heaven, there are hints in phrases like *āditya-varṇam tamasaḥ parastāt*, Him who is of sunlike lustre and beyond darkness (VIII 9). The universal form described in Chapter XI is regarded as one peculiar to the Lord. A human form is associated with Him in His incarnation as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though it is described in the commentary on XI 50 as endowed with four arms. We have to presume that, in spite of this indication, fools mistook Him to be a mere man (IX 11). The noteworthy feature about the forms assumed in incarnations is that they do not in any way detract from the greatness and glory of the Lord. They are, however, indicative at the same time of His abounding grace. In his introduction to the *Gītā* and again in his comments on IV. 8-9, Śrī Rāmānuja makes it clear that the Lord incarnates particularly with a view to show Himself to His devotees and also to win new devotees, if possible, by revealing His ravishing form and winsome qualities. The measureless charity which lies behind this divine mission can be understood in a way, if we reflect on the manner in which, for instance, the Lord whose unique and ineffable form is beyond mortal vision, made Himself visible to the eyes of all as a man among men in His incarnation as Kṛṣṇa. Not only this. He showed Himself publicly as the menial charioteer of Arjuna! Śrī Rāmānuja is profoundly moved by the contemplation of this manifestation of divine grace.

The individuals souls, according to Śrī Rāmānuja, are real and many. He argues that this is supported by the stanza with which, in his view, the teaching of the *Gītā* opens—II. 12. There Śrī Kṛṣṇa refers to 'I', 'you', 'these' and 'all of us'. Were it the Lord's intention to teach unqualified monism, it is argued. He would not have set about teaching an illusion to Arjuna. The plural is similarly used when talking of those who have attained final emancipation. For example, in XIV 2 we have "Those who resorting to this knowledge attain the possession of qualities that characterise Me, are not born even at the time of creation, nor hurt at the time of dissolution". Another instance is XV 4, where it is declared that those who are constant in the contemplation of the self go to that



immutable destination. The argument may appear too slender to bear the weight of a conclusive inference about the status of the individual self. But it helps, along with other arguments of more importance. Moreover, Śrī Rāmānuja was under an obligation to reply to Śrī Śaṅkara's explanation that the use of the plural in II. 12 is "with reference to distinction among bodies" and "not because of the opinion that the Self is more than one".

Each individual self is regarded by Śrī Rāmānuja as an atomic quantum of knowledge and consciousness. This is *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*, consciousness as a substance. Consciousness also functions as an attribute of the soul, as *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*, and in this role it is liable to expansion and contraction. The awareness of the soul increases or decreases according to the predominant quality of the matter with which it is in contact, and this in turn is largely the fruit of past *karmas*. This is indicated in the comments on various verses, particularly V. 16 and those in Chapter XIV.

The soul stands in a relation of superiority to the *prakṛti* or material Nature, and of inferiority to the Lord. It is described in VII. 5 as the higher *prakṛti* of the Lord, by which the lower *prakṛti* of matter is sustained. Śrī Rāmānuja misses no occasion to point out that, just as the body obeys the soul, so both souls and matter obey the Lord. It is an *aṁśa* or part of the Lord in the sense that it is His inseparable attribute and an attribute is part of the qualified whole.

The soul is generally described to be of the nature of knowledge and bliss. Śrī Rāmānuja has no quarrel with this position, but he would go deeper into the matter and find the essential nature of the soul in its *śeṣatva*, its dependent existence for the sake and delight of the Lord. Describing the man of wisdom among the four types of devotees mentioned in VII. 16, he writes that this devotee knows the nature of the self to be such as to have its sole delight in subservience to the Lord, as stated in the teaching that it forms the higher *prakṛti* of the Lord (VII. 5). Or, explaining *brahma-bhūta* in XVIII. 54, he observes that it refers to one to whom the realisation has come that the soul has for its essential nature complete subservience to the Lord and for its form unlimited knowledge.

In the state of *samsāra*, the soul does not realise its essential nature. Its attributive knowledge (*dharma-bhūta-jñāna*) is shrunk, on account of the effects of *karma*. The bondage of *karma*, conceived

of as without a *known* beginning, is capable of being brought to an end through various methods prescribed in the *sūtras*.

When this happens, the soul attains emancipation. In the state of salvation, it enjoys limitless knowledge and bliss. Śrī Rāmānuja, however, makes it clear that the soul does not merge into or become one with the Lord in this state of ultimate freedom. In XIV. 2, Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the emancipated souls as having attained community of characteristics with Himself. This bears a close resemblance to the teaching of *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (III. 1. 3) that the freed soul, devoid of all stain, attains the state of highest similarity or equality with the Lord. Śrī Rāmānuja quotes this scriptural text in the commentary on VI. 30 and other places. In view of the stress laid on the essential nature of the soul being one of subservience to the Lord, it may be gathered that even bliss in the state of salvation connotes little more than service to the Lord.

#### IV

Just as different schools of thought in India have entertained different views about the *summum bonum*, similarly they have looked to varied disciplines for its attainment. The *Gītā* is largely concerned with these. Śrī Rāmānuja seeks to show in his commentary here as in that on the *Brahma-sūtras*, that *bhakti-yoga*, the discipline of devotion to God, is the way of salvation. Under II. 10, it is declared that the entire teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from II. 12 to XVIII. 66 are meant to establish the truth about the individual soul and the Lord and the way of realising it through the path of devotion, as supplemented by those of works and knowledge. The introduction to Chapter III tries to show that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's main purpose is to teach, as the means of attaining the Lord, the way of devotion, which is variously described as knowing, worshipping and meditating. It is extolled in many places in the text as well as the commentary in various ways—for instance, under IX. 1-2, XI. 54, XII. 2, 6-7 and 20 and XVIII. 65. It is described as loving and uninterrupted meditation on God and service to Him in many ways under IX. 34 and XVIII. 65. Worship is defined in both these places as *paripūrṇa-śeṣa-yr̥ti*, the activity arising from complete dependence.

It may be added that Śrī Rāmānuja has included worship in temples as part of the way of devotion taught by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vide comments under IX. 34 and XII. 10. The offerings of leaves, flowers and water mentioned in IX. 26 suggest this mode of worship.

The way of devotion taught in the *Gītā* is regarded as a late stage in spiritual progress. The aspirant is required to start with the *karma-yoga* described in Chapter II. This may be briefly described as the performance of the obligatory and occasional rites prescribed in the *sāstras* for various *varṇas* and *āśramas* with the knowledge derived from the *sāstras* that the self is different from the body. The fruits of the works are to be given up. Even rituals intended for the satisfaction of desires are to be undertaken according to one's resources but the fruits are to be given up and the rites performed for the sake of salvation. A course of *karma-yoga* of this kind is potent in destroying the effects of the sins that obstruct one in pursuing the way of knowledge or *jñāna-yoga*. The objective of the latter is to realise the nature of the individual self as made up of knowledge and bliss. This requires constant reflection over the essential nature of the self which can be understood only when it is contemplated as it will be in a state of separation from the body.

Constant contemplation of this kind leads to the state of steady wisdom described in Chapter II. Four stages in the progress of the sage are set out in II. 55-8. The *Tātparyachandrikā* sums up the description of the accomplished *jñāna-yogin* as one whose delight is in self-realisation, who speaks only about the self, whose sitting is intended only for meditation and who moves about only in order to subserve self-realisation.

In the concluding stanza of the second chapter, what is called *brāhmī sthiti* is mentioned. Śrī Rāmānuja explains: "This state of performing work unattached which is based on the knowledge of the eternal self and which aims at the (state of) steady understanding, is the *brāhmī* state which brings about the attainment of the *brahman* (i.e., the self)." All this brings out the *Sangraha's* definition of *jñāna-yoga* as "the abidance (through ceaseless meditation) in the pure self by those who have controlled their minds" (23).

It is to be noted that the performance of prescribed rituals and duties is not to be given up, except during periods of mystical rapture known by the name of *samādhi*. Even when the realisation has been attained and the gain in spiritual insight, one is bidden to carry on the performance of duties. This will prevent a relapse.

In Chapters III to V, a different type of *karma-yoga* is taught. It is capable of leading to self-realisation directly and without the intervention of *jñāna-yoga*. It involves a fuller knowledge of the

nature of the soul and includes the practice of meditation on the self not being the agent of actions. Here too we have the performance of duties without the desire for the fruits thereof. The difference between *jñāna-yoga* and this kind of *karma-yoga* which includes within itself a knowledge of the self appears to be that in the former the performance of works is minimal and meditation is started too soon and without proper training.

In Śrī Rāmānuja's view, the *Gītā* teaches this *karma-yoga* for all and issues warnings about the dangers and pitfalls of *jñāna-yoga*. Even those who may feel qualified for the practice of *jñāna-yoga* should practise *karma-yoga* in order that they may not set a wrong example before the people (IV. 20-21). No less than 13 varieties of this *karma-yoga* are taught, according to Śrī Rāmānuja, in IV 25-29. It is worthy of note that those aspirants who are called *yoga-yajñāh* (IV 28) are described as resorting to sacred rivers and tanks and holy places. This bears a close relationship to the gloss on 'mat-karma' in XII 10 that it refers to the construction and maintenance of and service and worship in temples.

The discipline of concentrated meditation actually leading to self-realisation is described at some length in Chapter VI. It resembles the *aśāṅga-yoga* of Patañjali, but is at the same time slightly different in some details therefrom. Four stages of final realisation are described in verses 29-32 of that chapter, according to Śrī Rāmānuja. These are (i) the realisation that all souls are similar to one another on account of their being of the nature of knowledge, (ii) the realisation that the individual souls, when purified of the effects of both virtuous and sinful actions, attain many of the attributes of the Lord and reveal His powers and glories, (iii) the realisation even outside the trance of *samādhi* that all individual souls are similar to one another in being the inseparable modes of the Lord, and (iv) the realisation that all souls are similar in having nothing to do with relationships based on the bodies they dwell in. It is to be noted that the *karma-yogin*, starting with a theoretical knowledge of the self, progresses to direct experience of the nature of the self.

Two paths, it is suggested, open out before those who succeed in self-realisation. They may desire to realise God and attain to eternal union with Him. Or they may consider as their *summum bonum* a state of the soul in which it is freed of all association with the *prakṛti* and reveals in its innate knowledge and bliss. This latter

goal is known as *kaivalya* ('aloneness') in *Viṣṇūśāstra*. It has to be carefully distinguished from the *kaivalya* which is the final state of release of the *Sāṅkhya*s, and that which constitutes the *mokṣa* of the *Advaitins*.

In the school of *Vedānta* represented by Śrī Rāmānuja *kaivalya* is a kind of *mokṣa*, in that there is no return to *samsāra* for a soul attaining it. The difference between the *mokṣa* characterised by full experience of God and *kaivalya* is succinctly set down in his commentary on the *Gītā* under VIII 22 and in the *Śrībhāṣya* (IV 3 14). In the case of *mokṣa* the primary experience is about God who has the soul for His attribute; in the case of *kaivalya*, the experience is about the individual soul, though God comes into the picture secondarily as the soul of the soul. There is difference of opinion between the two sects into which the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja are divided, about whether or not the state of *kaivalya* is final, though both agree that it is inferior to the full experience of God in the freedom of *mokṣa*. Those who follow the lead of Śrī Lokācārya take the view that *kaivalya* cannot lead to anything else. Śrī Vedānta Deśika, on the other hand, argues that *kaivalya* is a halfway house to salvation, whence progress to the highest *mokṣa* is possible and indeed inevitable.

The self-realisation of those who desire eternal union with God necessarily leads them to the discipline known as *bhakti-yoga* or the way of devotion. If the true nature of the soul is *śeṣatva*, existence dependent on God, then surely devotion to God will spring up. And devotion will lead to ceaseless meditation on Him.

In the introduction to Chapter VII, *bhakti* is summed up as a mode of worship which consists of unceasing and loving remembrance of God. He equates it with the saving knowledge which, according to many passages in the *Upaniṣads*, enfranchises the soul from *samsāra*. This is one of the central doctrines of *Viṣṇūśāstra*, and the exposition here may be compared to that in the reply given to the small objection (*Laghu-pūrvapakṣa*) at the outset of the *Śrībhāṣya*. The point is that mere knowledge of the scriptures cannot lead to final release. Devotion, meditation and worship are essential.

In the last stanza of Chapter IX, Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches "Be one whose mind is placed on Me. Be My devotee. Be My worshipper. Prostrate before Me." This is repeated in XVIII 65. God is to

be thought of as the Ruler of rulers, the opposite of everything that is evil and the sole seat of auspiciousness. His enchanting form and His mercy, parental solicitude and magnanimity as well as majesty are to be thought about. Meditation on the Lord has to be with devotion. God must be felt as exceedingly dear. In this spirit worship also has to be conducted. "Worship, indeed, means the course of conduct of one who is completely subservient. Worship is well known to consist of presenting all objects of enjoyment, such as those offered in ceremonial acts of homage (like lights and incense), those which come into close contact with the body (such as sandal paste and garlands of flowers) and those meant to be eaten. What is said amounts to this. Become one whose mind is placed on Me in such a manner that you will get engaged in My worship brought about by love the excellence of which is unbounded and which springs from an experience of Myself." In addition, one has also to bow down in exceeding humility towards the Lord. The *Saṅgraha* sums up *bhakti-yoga* as 'abidance in such things as one-pointed devotion to the Supreme Being'.

It is further pointed out there that the man of wisdom among the devotees has no joy and sorrow other than union with and separation from the Lord. He feels that he has gained his self only through meditation on the Lord, vision of Him through such meditation, teaching about Him, bowing down before Him, praising His auspicious qualities and reciting His names. The activities of his senses, will, intellect and vital energies are concentrated on Him. He should perform all things from his own duties to the practice of devotion prompted solely by the love of God. God must be regarded as the only means for salvation, and not anything else.

*Bhakti-yoga*, as described above, cannot be practised all at once. Śrī Kṛṣṇa hints at stages in the development of *bhakti* in the *Gītā*, and these hints are explained by Śrī Rāmaṇuja. A vague feeling of reverence or friendliness towards God may be called *bhakti*; so too, the ardour of the devotee to whom separation from God for even a moment is unbearable. Śrī Kṛṣṇa refers to the initial state of devotion as well as its culmination. In XI. 54 He declares that only through exclusive devotion it is possible to know, see and enter into Him. It is obvious that the devotion required for knowing, seeing and entering into Him cannot all be of the same stage. In XVIII (54-55), again, such stages are referred to.

Tradition has defined at least three such stages in the progress of *bhakti*. Elsewhere—in Śrī Rāmānuja's prose hymns—these are called *para-bhakti*, *para-jñāna* and *parama-bhakti*. Under XI. 53-54 *T.C.* explains that devotion in the initial stage is a merely favourable disposition towards God, it has its roots in the effects of good deeds done in earlier births, it arises from conversation with the good and pious, and it is helpful in giving one knowledge of God as taught in the *sāstras*. Then comes an intense desire to see God; *para-bhakti* where this is found is the means for a direct vision of God. After the vision arises the ardour for the complete experience of God in all its fulness which marks *parama-bhakti*. Thus it is this *parama-bhakti* which constitutes the immediate means for final release.

In the *Śrībhāṣya*, *bhakti-yoga* is associated with various forms of meditation on the *Brahman* known as the *brahma-vidyās*. These are not specifically referred to by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rāmānuja shows (under VIII 3 and 21) that the seeker after *kaivalya* practises the *vidyā* of the five fires. It is to be presumed that any other *brahma-vidyā* may be practised by the *bhakti-yogin* seeking the salvation of God-attainment. The *Gītā* is content to point out, like *S B* (III 3 44), that Nārāyaṇa is the object of meditation in all the *vidyās*.

*Bhakti* in forms which cannot be included in the *bhakti-yoga* associated with the *vidyās*, is also mentioned by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In XII 10, according to Śrī Rāmānuja, there is a reference to the construction of temples, their maintenance, worshipping the Lord there, uttering His names and such other things, all carried out with love. This is suggested to be the sprout of *bhakti*. Again, in XI 24, it is declared that those who find refuge in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whatever their caste or sex, even though they may be of sinful birth, will reach the supreme goal. It is obvious that the *bhakti* taught here is open to all without reference to caste or sex. Similarly, in XVIII. 44-45, the *Śūdra* is assured of supreme beatitude, even like members of the other three castes. It is clear that a kind of *bhakti*—not to speak of *prapatti*—is open to him.

## V

An essential preliminary to the practice of *bhakti-yoga* is self-realisation. In the commentary on XVIII 66, it is suggested that countless sins of commission and omission stand in the way of our

taking up *bhakti-yoga*, the grand way of salvation. The practice of *karma-yoga* and perhaps also *jñāna-yoga* till the attainment of self-realisation will mean the wiping away of these sins. They may also be wiped away wholly or in part by the performance of expiatory rites.

*Prapatti* or complete reliance on God's grace and self-surrender to Him is pointed out as a substitute for these expiatory rites in this context. Here, as under the *Vedānta-sūtras* (particularly under III 2 34), Śrī Rāmānuja hints at a teaching, implicit in most of his writings and made explicit in his *Śaranāgati-gadya*. The later history of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* shows emphasis on *prapatti* to the exclusion not merely of *karma* and *jñāna*, but also of *bhakti*. It is of some interest to enquire why Śrī Rāmānuja chose in what may be called official and canonical works to teach *bhakti*, while practising *prapatti* and celebrating it lyrically.

*Prapatti* as a way of salvation relies purely on God's grace. After all, every path to final beatitude derives its value ultimately from God's approval. His grace therefore can work outside the limits of the way of works or that of knowledge or that of devotion. Only those are saved really on whom the saving grace of God falls, though redemption often is traced to some prescribed way of salvation or other.

There is scriptural authority available for *prapatti* as for other paths. A passage found both in the *Kaṭha* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads* declares that God reveals Himself only to those whom He chooses. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, Revelation teaches by example "Being desirous of winning salvation, I seek refuge." What is briefly taught in texts like these is elaborated in the epics and the *purāṇas*. In the *Rāmāyana*, the episode of Rama's acceptance of Vibhīṣaṇa is taken to be one such elaboration. The *Gītā* of course is taken to teach it in XVIII 66. The Tamil mystics known as the *āḥvāra*, whose poems have been raised to a position of authority and described as the Tamil *Veda*, have also taught *prapatti*. They have clearly referred to the *Gītā* as recommending *prapatti* (as in *Tiruvāymozhi* VII. 5. 10). Śrī Yāmuna, who was the acknowledged preceptor of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, before the rise of Śrī Rāmānuja, has also taught *prapatti* in his well-known devotional poem, *Stotra-ratna*.

Śrī Rāmānuja thus had a long tradition behind him in his teaching about *prapatti*. The diffidence of one putting forward a new teaching



need not have affected him in this case. That still he should have stressed *bhakti* rather than *prapatti* in his commentaries on the *Vedānta-Sūtras* and the *Gītā* may perhaps be accounted for by the audience to whom these works were addressed. Śrī Rāmānuja's polemical works on the *Vedānta* were probably intended to persuade to his way of thinking those wedded to the ways of *jñāna*, *jñāna-karma-sam uccaya* and *karma*. If they could be converted to faith in *bhakti*, Śrī Rāmānuja's purpose would be nearly achieved. And he might have felt that *bhakti*, linked or identified with the *upāsana* of the *Upaniṣads*, was nearer their way of thinking than *prapatti*.

The claim of the *Gītā* to teach the way of redemption to all, irrespective of caste or sex, also strengthens the case for *prapatti* being regarded as the essence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instruction. The traditional *bhakti-yoga* is allowed only to those entitled to study the *Veda*. The *Gītā* specifically reaches out to those lacking qualifications prescribed for *bhakti-yoga*. As we have seen Śrī Kṛṣṇa also teaches a *bhakti* different from *bhakti-yoga*, and it may be closely related to *prapatti*.

Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Gītā* and the *Vedānta-Sūtras* do not contradict the stress laid on *prapatti*. In the *Śrībhāṣya* (III 2 34), he writes that "it is appropriate for the Supreme Person who is the object of attainment, to be Himself the means of attaining Him" and that "the scripture declares that none else can be the means (of attaining Him than He Himself)". The idea of the Lord being the means is mentioned in the *Gītā* more than once. The *Saṅgraha* also concludes with the recommendation that the Lord must be seen to be the means.

Be that as it may, *prapatti* has always been the orthodox doctrine among the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja. And the *Gītā* is generally interpreted by them as teaching *prapatti*. It is pointed out that Arjuna seeks protection through *prapatti*, when at the commencement of the *Gītā*, he entreats Śrī Kṛṣṇa to teach him (II 3). Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself refers to *prapatti* off and on in the course of His teachings. For example, He declares that those alone can cross *māyā* who have resorted to *prapatti* (VII 14). Again, *prapatti* is also taught in XV. 4 and XVIII. 62. And finally, it is claimed, the teaching of *prapatti* is specially given in XVIII. 66. After noting Arjuna's overwhelming diffidence in the face of the difficulties presented by the paths of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa advises him not to lose heart,

but to surrender himself entirely to divine grace. In this way, the *Gītā* is regarded as saying its last words commanding *prapatti*

## VI

The method adopted by Śrī Rāmānuja is based on certain assumptions common to Indian teachers expounding sacred works. They believe that the revealed scriptures are self-consistent. Any apparent contradictions or inconsistencies can be reconciled by one who diligently seeks for principles of harmony and consistency. It is further assumed that the *Gītā* as a work of secondary authority reinforces and elaborates the teachings of the *Upaniṣads*. Śrī Rāmānuja's method of dealing with the *śruti* texts and their parallels in the *Gītā* is found well illustrated under XIII. 2. A *Śvet. Up* text provides the authority for the plurality of selves. Śrī Rāmānuja finds it taught in II. 12. Similarly, X. 20 is supported by the famous *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛh. Up*. The *vaṣṇu Purāṇa* is an important *smṛti* on which Śrī Rāmānuja frequently relies to support or clarify the teachings of the *Gītā*.

Śrī Rāmānuja assumes not merely harmony between the *Gītā* and the *Upaniṣads*; he also finds the *Gītā* itself coherent and cogent. Modern scholarship delights in finding anomalies and contradictions in ancient works. It is a large assumption that the writers of the past were incapable of writing consistently. This assumption is frequently made with reference to the *Gītā* by those who have no patience to study the work in the light of its own synthesis and unity. Śrī Rāmānuja gives an effective demonstration of interpreting the *Gītā* in the light of the *Gītā* itself.

He remembers that the *Gītā* is a dialogue between a sincere teacher and an eager and questioning student. The progress of thought therein is determined by the method of question and answer. The answer again has to expound fundamental principles and demonstrate their application. This means that frequently we shall meet with brief statements followed by detailed expositions or long discourses ending in summary conclusions. Once this natural technique of oral teaching is seen to underlie the *Gītā*, its obscurities and inconsistencies can be resolved by references to other places earlier or later in the text. As Professor M. Rangacharya points out, "The fact that the conversational method adopted in the *Gītā* necessitates the development of its theme in a manner markedly different from

what is in vogue in modern essays and dissertations does not imply that the *Gītā* is verbose, disconnected, illogical or incoherent ”.

In illustration of Śrī Rāmānuja's method of explaining the *Gītā* in the light of its use of the technique of oral teaching, let us take a few passages where the explanations given may appear strange or far-fetched to those not familiar with the context. In II 17, it is taught “None can bring about the destruction of this (self) which is indestructible”. What is summarily mentioned as ‘none’ here is described in detail a few verses later “Weapons do not cut this (self). fire does not burn it and water does not wet it nor does the wind dry (it)” (23) Keeping this clarification in mind, Śrī Rāmānuja explains ‘none’ in verse 17 as ‘destroying agents like weapons, water, air, fire etc’ To take another instance In II 47, Arjuna is told “Do not become the cause of work and (its) fruits ” This is interpreted to mean that Arjuna is asked to meditate on his not being the agent and not having any right to the fruits. The commentary here is based on what is taught in the *Gītā* later on in III. 27, 28 and 30 and XVIII 14-15

As another example, we may take up IV 17, where the expressions, ‘*akarma*’ and ‘*vikarma*’, occur These are explained respectively as knowledge of the self and varied action The authority for this interpretation is seen in the immediately succeeding verses, where we find expounded the role played by the knowledge of the self in *karma-yoga* in ascending order of clarity The *Tātparyachandrika* explains by way of introduction to IV 21 that the proposition set out in stanza 18 is explained in the next *śloka*, elaborated in 20 and critically examined in 21-23. A similar kind of elaboration may be seen in the way in which the *gñānin* among the *bhaktas* is praised in VII 17-19

The identification with *kāma* of that which is called superior to *buddhi* in III 42 has been criticised as far-fetched But if the context is looked into, the reasonableness of Śrī Rāmānuja's view becomes immediately apparent Stanzas 39 to 41 deal with *kāma*. There is nothing to indicate that a new topic is introduced in stanza 42, Again, stanza 43 mentions *kāma*. By all canons of interpretation the pronoun, ‘*saḥ*’, in 42 can only refer to *kāma*. Moreover, it is not as if Śrī Rāmānuja had been actuated by some special perversity Jayatirtha in his gloss on Śrī Madhva's commentary refers to Bhāskara having adopted this view. It may be presumed that Bhāskara might

have followed some earlier writers. So the identification of 'śaḥ' with 'kāma' seems to be hallowed by tradition as well as demanded by the context. It may also be noted that the splitting up of 'anādi-matparam' in XIII 12 as 'anādi' and 'matparam' is at least older than Śrī Sankara, as he tries to controvert it.

Arjuna's questions and statements are also used by Śrī Rāmānuja to clarify the purport of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's teaching. At the outset of Chapter IV, it may appear that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's teaching about divine incarnations does not arise naturally as an answer to Arjuna's questions. But questions can be understood in the light of the answers given to them, provided the person who answers is reasonably intelligent and the person asking the questions is satisfied. That is how Śrī Rāmānuja takes Arjuna's question to refer to the ontological status of the incarnation. Similarly in Chapter XVII, Arjuna's question has to be understood in the light of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answer.

Though Arjuna's mistaken notions have to be corrected, he is sometimes partly and sometimes wholly right. Even as Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not hesitate to correct Arjuna when he is wrong, He accepts his views when they agree with His own and are right. In VI 34, for example, Arjuna definitely declares that the *yoga* under discussion is concerned with *sāmya* (or equality)—equality, that is, between the selves and the *Brahman* and among the selves. "I consider all this to be true, O Keśava, which You tell me," he asserts in X 14. Seeing the universal form of the Lord, he affirms "You pervade all and therefore You are all" (XI 40).

Śrī Rāmānuja's endeavour to understand the *Gītā* in the light of its own structure has been briefly indicated. It may be added that he has taken considerable pains to indicate the course of development of the discussion, pointing out carefully the transitions from stanza to stanza and from topic to topic.

In addition to the *Śruti* and the *Smṛti*, Śrī Rāmānuja makes use of the *Vedānta-Sūtras* also in interpreting the *Gītā*. It is his view that Śrī Kṛṣṇa refers to the *Sūtras* in XIII. 4. Leaving aside the problem posed by possible references to the *Gītā* in the *Sūtras*, we may note that Śrī Rāmānuja finds nothing but harmony between the teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and those of the *Sūtras*. Of course, while covering much common ground, each of them has special fields of its own. For instance, the theory of divine incarnations gets adequate treatment only in the *Gītā*. Image-worship finds some

support in the *Gītā*. Various problems concerning the relations between the self and the world and those dealing with the *Brahman* as the cause of the world are examples of topics treated at length in the *Śrībhāṣya*.

It is possible that the tradition which Śrī Rāmānuja tried to serve in writing his commentary on the *Gītā* was influenced also by the hymns of the *āzhvārs*. In *Ācārya-hṛdaya* ('The Heart of the Master'), a work of the Southern School which seeks to penetrate into the depths of the mysticism of saṅkopa, noted among the *āzhvārs* for the range and intensity of his experience of God, an interesting parallelism is shown between his *Tiruvāymozhi* and the *Gītā*. Śrī Rāmānuja's description of the essential nature of the self as *śeṣatva* rests no doubt on notable *śruti* texts like those of the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* but the stress laid on it may owe something to a famous passage in *Tiruvāymozhi* (VIII 8 2). It is also possible that the distinction between *kaivalya* and the salvation of God-attainment may have been clarified for Śrī Rāmānuja by the Tamil mystics. The reduction of the four classes of devotees to three may also have been in part inspired or supported by the works of the *āzhvārs*.

## VI

The spirit in which Śrī Rāmānuja seeks to expound the *Gītā* is far removed from that of polemics of controversy. It is only in two specific passages—under II 12 and XIII 2—that Śrī Rāmānuja enters into a debate with the *Advaitins* and the followers of Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa. Except for these digressions, his commentary proceeds throughout to explain the teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in such a way as to inspire selflessness, service to fellow-men and devotion to God. His own character stands revealed as a mystic, a devotee of God and a preceptor eager and competent to transform disciples by his teaching.

There is an old Sanskrit verse which sums up what a *bhāṣya* is expected to achieve, and Śrī Rāmānuja's *bhāṣya* may be credited with having fulfilled these objectives. Said to be quoted by Bharata, the author of a brief commentary on *Livingādisangraha*, it runs as follows:

*Sūtrārtho varnyate yatra vakyas sūtrānukāribhāṣā  
Svapadāni cha varnyante Bhāṣyam bhāṣyavido viduḥ*

The definition is primarily concerned with commentaries on *sūtras* but it can apply also to those on works consisting of stanzas. The point is that the *bhāṣya* must explain the purport of the original

work in sentences that follow the words of the original: it should also explain further its own words, whenever necessary. No one who goes through Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Gītā* will fail to notice that it seeks to explain practically every word of every stanza and that this is attempted so as to be in consonance with the stanza as a whole and with the context in which the stanza occurs.

## VII

The merits of Śrī Rāmānuja's commentary are obvious. It is clear, cogent, consistent and coherent. It seeks to understand every stanza in the light of the *Gītā* as a whole. Its defect from the point of view of philological or historical scholarship is that it looks upon the *Gītā* as a living scripture offering guidance and instruction to the sincere seeker in all ages. That this conviction is not fanciful is proved by the way in which eminent Indians even in the twentieth century have turned to the *Gītā* for enlightenment and inspiration. Even outside India, choice spirits like Emerson and Thoreau have made this approach to the *Gītā*. Warren Hastings predicted, when founding the British empire in India, that the *Gītā* would outlast that empire, and the continued interest in the *Gītā* today in India shows him to have been a true prophet. So long as the *Gītā* is able to serve this purpose, studies like those of Śrī Rāmānuja furnish valuable insights to the student who seeks for inspiration as well as information.

## VIII

The *Tātparyachandrikā* of Śrī Vedānta Deśika (1268-1368) is invaluable for a study of the *Rāmānuja-bhāṣya* on the *Gītā*. It brings out the full force of the *bhāṣya*, sentence by sentence and often word by word. Clear and lucid in style, except where some technical discussions become inevitable, it elucidates the comments of the *bhāṣya*. The implications are made explicit. Often it is pointed out why Śrī Rāmānuja differs from some other commentator or commentators on a particular point or issue. Variant readings are also noticed. Additional verses commented on by Yādāvaprakāśa or Nārāyaṇya are also given. Occasionally, there are long passages devoted to logical debate with other schools of thought or with the point of view represented by Śrī Lokāchārya. On the whole, however, the *Tātparyachandrikā* is elucidatory and not polemical. It reflects and reveals the spirit of Śrī Rāmānuja's teachings as handed down in unbroken oral tradition. It is as indispensable for the study of the *Gītābhāṣya* as the *Srutaprakāśikā* of Sudarśana is for the understanding of the *Śrībhāṣya*.

—M. R. S

श्री  
श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः.

# THE ' BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

with the commentary of Sri Rāmānujachārya

## CHAPTER I

यत्पदाम्भोरुह्म्यानविध्वस्ताशेषकल्मष ।

वस्तुतामुपयातोऽहं यामुनेय नमामि तम् ॥

I bow to that well-known Yāmunāchārya —I all of whose sins without exception were destroyed by meditation over his lotuslike feet, and who was (thus) led (even) to realise the state of being spiritually alive <sup>1</sup>

The Lord of Lakshmi,<sup>2</sup> He who is the opposite of everything that is evil and the sole seat of all auspiciousness who is (as described above) distinguished from all things other than Him who is infinite, and is solely of the nature of knowledge as bliss who is the vast ocean of countless auspicious qualities, each unbounded and unsurpassed, such as knowledge, strength, sovereignty, valour, power and glory<sup>3</sup> that are of His own nature whose divine form is the treasure-house

1 The word, '*rasatula*', meaning 'substantiality' or 'reality', has been rendered as 'the state of being spiritually alive' Compare *Tattv Up* (II 6 1) "Whoever knows the *Brahman* as non-existent, he becomes non-existent indeed Whoever knows the *Brahman* as existent him, therefore, they know as existing" (*T' C'*)

2 Sri or Lakshmi is the goddess of fortune, beauty and mercy, and as the wife of the Lord she is the Divine Mother Later, her characteristics are described She is the mediatrix whose grace helps to win salvation for the individual soul from the Lord Opinions differ among the followers of Sri Ramanuja as to her status and essential nature But they agree that Narayana, as shown by His relationship to her, is distinguished from all minor gods

3 The six qualities mentioned here are regarded as primary, *V P* (VI 5 79) mentions them as implied by the Lord being called 'Bhagavat' *T' C'* explains them thus Knowledge means the direct perception of all things at all times, strength is giving support to all things thus seen, through sovereignty they are ruled even as they are being supported, valour is tireless energy, power is the ability to do impossible things and glory is seen in there being no need for any assistance from anyone or anything

of infinite qualities, agreeable to and worthy of Him and each unsurpassed, such as brilliancy, grace, fragrance, tender softness, beauty and youthfulness, which are unchangeable, unthinkable, supernatural, miraculous, everlasting and faultless—who is adorned with countless divine ornaments of various kinds, appropriate to Him, variegated, infinitely wonderful, eternal and free from imperfections—who possesses countless divine weapons which are worthy of Him, are of unthinkable prowess and are eternal, faultless and unsurpassably auspicious—who is the beloved consort of Lakshmi the multitude of whose unlimited, unsurpassed and innumerable auspicious qualities such as sovereignty and graciousness and whose nature, form and (it) excellences and whose glory are dear to and worthy of Him and are eternal and faultless—the pair of whose feet is incessantly extolled by countless eternally free souls<sup>4</sup>—whose nature, existence and activity in all their varieties depend on His will, whose essential characteristic is sole delight in complete subservience (to the Lord), who are eternal (i.e., ever manifest in their essential nature), who are faultless, and who possess multitudes of infinite qualities such as unsurpassed knowledge, (devotional) activity and supreme power etc.—whose essential nature and characteristics cannot be measured by speech and mind—whose abode is the Supreme Heaven—which abounds in many kinds, each variegated, of innumerable objects of enjoyments as well as the means and places of enjoyment, all appropriate to Him, which is full of infinite wonder, which is full of measureless transcendent glory, and which is of infinite extent and is eternal, faultless and immutable—whose sport it is to create, sustain and dissolve the whole universe completely filled with diverse, wonderful and countless objects of enjoyment and orders of beings that enjoy (them)—who is the Supreme *Brahman*, the Highest Person and *Nārāyaṇa* <sup>5</sup>

(He), after having created the entire universe, beginning with *Brahmā* (the four-faced creator) and ending with immovable objects,

4 Individual souls are of three kinds—those involved in *samsara*, those emancipated therefrom and those who have never been subject to bondage. These last are the eternally free souls, who serve the Lord in the Highest Heaven. *T' C* quotes about them *S' V* (III 18 2 4)

5 The three names of the Lord are from the scriptures. The first two of them are found also in *B' G* (X 12, XV 18). "The purport of the three words is that the Lord being the same as all things (*Brahman*) and also being different from all things (*Puruṣottama*) becomes appropriate through His being (*Nārāyaṇa*) the Internal Ruler of all" (*T' C*)



while remaining in His own form, was inaccessible through meditation, worship and such other (devotional) acts, to the gods headed by Brahmā (the four-faced creator) and to men being the vast ocean of boundless mercy, affability, affection and generosity, He made His own form in conformity with the nature of the configuration of each one of the several species of beings, without giving up His own essential nature and thus descending again and again into each one of (their) regions, and being worshipped by (the respective beings of) each one of them, He bestowed upon them fruits known as righteousness, wealth, enjoyments and the salvation of soul-emancipation conformably to the wish of each

And under the pretext of removing the burden of the earth, (but really) for the purpose of becoming the object of refuge even to (unworthy) people like us, He descended to the earth and made Himself visible to the eyes of all men having done such divine acts as ravished the minds and eyes of all men (both) high and low (i.e., the saints and the vulgar) having killed Pūtana, Śakata, the twin *arjuna* trees, Arista, Pralamba, Dhenuka, Kāliya, Keśin, Kuvalaya-pida, Cānūra, Muṣṭika, Tosala, Kamsa<sup>6</sup> and such others having refreshed the entire universe with the nectar of His looks and words, pregnant with boundless compassion, friendliness and love having made Akrūra, the garland-maker (*mālālāra*) and such others the greatest of the godly through the manifestation of (His) surpassing beauty, affability and such other qualities.<sup>7</sup>

Under the pretext of encouraging the son of Pāṇdu to fight, He promulgated the way of realising God through love (*bhakti-yoga*), which is fostered by (the ways of) knowledge and works (namely, *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga*), which has Himself for its object and which is declared in the *Vedānta* as the means for the attainment of the emancipation of the soul, the highest of human ends.

With this in view, when that war between the sons of Pāṇdu and the descendants of Kuru commenced, He, the gracious Lord, the Supreme Person, the Master of all the gods, (He) who assumed

6 For these adventures of Sri Kṛṣṇa's boyhood, vide *V. P.* (1) and *B. P.* (x). Brief notes are given in the Index.

7 Incarnation is primarily for this beneficent purpose. Vide commentary on *B. G.* (IV. 8).

a mortal form for helping the world (to salvation)<sup>8</sup>, who is over-powered by His affection for those who seek refuge with Him, made Prthā's son (Arjuna) the knight in the chariot and Himself the charioteer, as witnessed by the whole world.

Even though knowing the matters to be thus, Dhṛtarāstra, who was blind in every way, wished to learn of the victory of Suyodhana (more familiarly known as Duryodhana) and asked of Sañjaya (as follows)

**धृतराष्ट्र उवाच—**

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सव ।  
मामका. पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥ १ ॥

**सञ्जय उवाच—**

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।  
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

पश्येता पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्यं महतीं चमूम् ।  
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।  
युधामन्युः विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथ ॥ ४ ॥

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशीराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।  
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गव ॥ ५ ॥

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।  
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वे एव महारथा ॥ ६ ॥

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।  
नायका मम सैन्यस्य सज्जार्थं तान् ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७ ॥

मबान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिञ्जय ।

अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥

अन्ये च बहव शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविता ।

नानाशस्त्रप्रहराणास्सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥

अपर्याप्त तदस्माक बल भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।

पर्याप्त त्विदमेतेषा बल भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ १० ॥

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिता ।

भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्वे एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

तस्य सजनयन् हर्षं कुरुवृद्ध पितामह ।

सिंहनाद विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२ ॥

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखा ।

सहस्रैवाम्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति म्यन्दने स्थितौ ।

माधव पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतु ॥ १४ ॥

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जय ।

पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिर ।

नकुल सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥

काश्यश्च परमेष्वास शिखण्डी च महारथः ।

धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७ ॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वतः पृथिवीपते ।

सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान् दध्मुः पृथक् पृथक् ॥ १८ ॥

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।

नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ १९ ॥

## DHĪRTARĀSTRA SAID ·

1 *My people and also the sons of Pāṇdu, who had gathered together on the holy field of Kurukṣetra with the wish to fight (among themselves)—what did they do, O Sañjaya?*<sup>9</sup>

## SAÑJAYA SAID

2 *Moved by the sight of the army of the Pāṇdavas in battle-array<sup>10</sup>, King Duryodhana approached his preceptor (Drona) and said (these) words*

3 *“ See, O master, this great army of the Pāṇdavas, arranged for battle by your intelligent disciple, the son of Drupada*

4 *Here are men of valour, skilful in wielding the bow and equal to Bhīma and Arjuna in battle—Yuyudhāna, Virāta and Drupada the master of the great chariot<sup>11</sup>*

5 *Dhristaketu, Cekitāna and the valorous King of Kāśī, Puruṣu, Kuntibhoja and Śaśbya the best of men*

6 *And the mighty Yudhāmanyu, the manly Uttamaujas, (Abhimanyu) the son of Subhadrā, and the sons of Draupadī—all of them masters of the great chariot*

7 *O best among Brahmins, learn also of those who are distinguished among us and are the commanders of my army I shall mention them to you by name by way of enumeration*

8 *Yourself, Bhīsmā, Karna, the war-winning Kṛpa Aśvatthāman, Viśkarna, as also the son of Somadatta*

9 *And many other heroes who have offered their lives for my sake, who have various kinds of arms for close fighting and missiles, and who are all competent in the art of war*

9 Dhṛtarāstra blindly hoped for his son's victory. Sañjaya's direct reply to his hopes is given in XVIII 78

10 The 'tu' in I 2 implies a change of mood on the part of Duryodhana after seeing the opposite army in battle array (T C)

11 'The master of the great chariot' or the *mahāratha* is one defined as a knight who from a great chariot in the battle field can successfully attack 10,000 archers on foot

10 Still, inadequate is our army protected (i e , led) by Bhīma  
But this army of theirs, protected (i e , led) by Bhīma, is adequate <sup>12</sup>

11. Therefore, do you all guard Bhīma only, staying in your respective positions in all the lines "

12 Then the valiant grandfather, the respected elder among the Kurus, made loudly the lion's roar and blew his conch in order to bring about joy in him (i e Duryodhana)

13 Thereupon, suddenly conchs, kettledrums small drums, large drums and trumpets were sounded That noise became an uproar

14 Then, remaining in a mighty chariot to which white horses were harnessed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Mādhava) and Arjuna (the son of Pāṇdu) blew their divine conchs

15 Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeṣa) blew (His conch) Pāṇcajanya, Arjuna (or Dhanañjaya, his) Devadatta, and Bhīma of fearful deeds the great conch, Paundra

16 King Yudhishthira, the son of Kuntī (blew his conch) Ananta-vijaya, and Nakula and Sahadeva (their conchs) Sughoṣa and Manipuspaka (respectively)

17 And the King of Kāśī the great archer, Śikhandin the master of the great chariot, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, and Sūtyakī who could never be defeated

18 Drupada, the sons of Draupadī, and (Abhimanyu) Subhadra's son of mighty arms—blew, O king, (their) conchs severally

19 That tumultuous sound tore asunder the hearts of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons (only), while making the earth and the heavens resound

12 Some render 'aparyāptam' and 'paryāptam' as unlimited and 'limited' This would make out Duryodhana to be full of self confidence The interchange of 'Bhīma' and 'Bhīṣma' in the two lines of the stanza in a not generally accepted version is intended to bring out the same view, while taking the two words as 'inadequate' and 'adequate' 'T' (' supports at length Śrī Rāmānuja's view about Duryodhana's state of mind by a detailed study of the context

“Duryodhana, after personally surveying the army of the Pāṇḍavas, protected (i e, led) by Bhīma, and his own army, protected (i e, led) by Bhīṣma, informed his preceptor (Drona) of the adequacy of his (Bhīma's) army for conquering his (i e Duryodhana's) and the inadequacy of his own army for victory against them, and became despondent within himself. Seeing his grief, and in order to bring about joy in him,<sup>13</sup> Bhīṣma engaged himself in making the lion's roar and the blowing of (his) conch. And by means of (other) conchs and kettle-drums, (he) raised an uproar which challenged victory. Then, hearing that uproar, both (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) the Lord of all the gods, who was (then acting as) the charioteer of Arjuna, and (Arjuna) the son of Pāṇḍu, who was the knight within the chariot, blew, from within the mighty chariot which could be a fit instrument for the conquest of the three worlds, their divine conchs, the illustrious Pāñcājanya and Devadatta making the three worlds tremble. Then Yudhishthira, Bhīma and others blew their own conch-shells severally. That (terrific) uproar tore asunder the hearts of your sons headed by Duryodhana. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra thought, ‘The army of the Kurus is even now lost.’<sup>14</sup> Thus spoke Sañjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra who longed for their victory.

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।

प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डव ॥ २० ॥

हृषीकेश तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अर्जुन उवाच—

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

यावदेतान् निरोक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।

कर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥ २२ ॥

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेयुं प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ २३ ॥

13 ‘Sañjanayan’ in 12 is taken as ‘to bring about’, not as ‘bringing about’. Vide *Pāṇini* (III 2 123)

14 The rending of the heart of Duryodhana is seen in the collapse of his confidence (T ‘)

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।  
 सेनयोर्हभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥  
 भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतस्सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।  
 उवाच पार्थ पश्येतां समवेतां कुरुनिति ॥ २५ ॥

20 Then he (Arjuna) of the monkey-flag,<sup>15</sup> seeing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra drawn up for battle, and taking up his bow, as the (preliminary) clashing of weapons began

21 Said these words, O King, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeśa)

ARJUNA SAID

Station my chariot, O Kṛṣṇa (Achyuta) between the two armies

22 As long as I need to observe accurately these men, arranged for battle and eager to fight, and (find out) by whose side I must fight in this enterprise of war

23 I shall observe those who are offering battle those have come here to please in battle the wicked son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra

SANJAYA SAID

24 O Dhṛtarāṣṭra (descendant of Bharata), thus addressed by Arjuna (Gudakeśa), Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeśa) stationed the excellent chariot between the two armies

25 While Bhīṣma, Drona and others and all the kings (gathered there) were looking on, and said 'O Arjuna (Pārtha)' see these Kurus assembled here'

He (Saṁjaya) went on to say (to Dhṛtarāṣṭra) "Then, seeing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, ready and eager for battle, Arjuna (the son of Pāṇḍu), who had as his flag (Hanumat) the monkey who had

15 Hanumat, famous in Ram, granting a boon to Bhīma, agrees to take the place of a flag on Arjuna's chariot (M B III 153) His appearance in the role frightens the opposite side (Ibid VI 19)

burnt Lankā, urged (Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is) the Treasure-house of knowledge, power, strength, sovereignty, valour and glory,<sup>16</sup> whose sport it is to create, sustain and dissolve the universe at His own will, who is the Lord of the senses, who is engaged in controlling in all ways the internal and external organs of all men, high and low, who, overpowered by His love for His dependants, is engaged in driving his (Arjuna's) chariot—(Him Arjuna urged) saying, 'Station my chariot in a place affording a view of them, in order that I may see those who wish to fight (me) as they actually are' Thus, urged by him (Arjuna), He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) did at once as He had been urged to do, while Bhīṣma, Drona and others and all the kings were looking on. Such is the victorious position of our party."<sup>17</sup>

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान् पार्थ पितृन्थ पितामहान् ।

आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्राव्पौत्रान्सखीस्तथा ॥ २६ ॥

अशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेय सर्वान्वन्धून्वस्थितान् ॥ २७ ॥

कृपया परयाऽऽविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

अर्जुन उवाच—

दृष्ट्वेम स्वजनं कृष्ण ! युयुत्सु समुपस्थितम् ॥ २८ ॥

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ २९ ॥

गाण्डीव स्रसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातु भ्रमतीव च मे मन ॥ ३० ॥

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हृत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ ३१ ॥

16 'Achvuta' in 1 21, meaning 'one from whose essential nature (as perfection) there can be no falling away' is thus explained (T' C)

17. Sāñjaya is ironical



न काङ्क्षे विजय कृष्ण न च राज्य सुखानि च । 1260

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥ ३२ ॥

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगा सुखानि च । 1261

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणास्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥ ३३ ॥

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।

मातुलाश्चशुरा पौत्रा स्यात्संबन्धिनस्तथा ॥ ३४ ॥

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥ ३५ ॥

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्न का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वेतानाततायिनः ॥ ३६ ॥

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्संबान्धवान् ।

स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥ ३७ ॥

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहं च पातकम् ॥ ३८ ॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ॥ ३९ ॥

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।

धर्मो नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ ४० ॥

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।

स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वाष्ण्ये जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥ ४१ ॥

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।

पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषा लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रिया ॥ ४२ ॥

दोषैरेतं कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकं ।

उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ ४३ ॥

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणा मनुष्याणा जनार्दन ।

नरके नियत वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम् ॥ ४४ ॥

अहो बत महत्पाप कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।

यद्वाज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यता ॥ ४५ ॥

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणय ।

धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतर भवेत् ॥ ४६ ॥

**सञ्जय उवाच—**

एवमुक्त्वाऽर्जुनस्सख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।

विसृज्य सशर चाप शोकसविश्रमानस ॥ ४७ ॥

26 Then, Arjuna saw standing there fathers, grandfathers, preceptors, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and also friends

27 Fathers-in-law and intimate friends in both the armies Seeing all (his) kinsmen thus drawn up for battle, (Arjuna) that son of Kunti

28 Was overwhelmed by supreme compassion and spoke grieving, as follows

### ARJUNA SAID

Seeing these kinsmen, who have come here, eager for war

29 My limbs give away, my mouth dries up, my body trembles, and the hairs stand on end

30 (The bow) Gāndīva slips away from my hand, and even my skin burns everywhere I am unable to remain in any position, and my mind seems to whirl

31 I see evil omens also, O Kṛṣṇa (Keshava), and do not foresee any good to follow killing my own people in battle

32 I do not wish for victory, O Kṛṣṇa! nor for the kingdom, nor for pleasures Of what use to us, O Kṛṣṇa (Govinda), is a kingdom, of what use are enjoyments or even life (itself)?

33 Those for whose sake the kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures are desired by us, they themselves are arrayed for battle, giving up (i.e., risking) their lives and wealth

34 Preceptors, fathers, sons and similarly also grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law and also other kinsmen \*

35 These I do not wish to kill, though assaulted, O Kṛṣṇa (Madhusūdana), even for the kingship of the three worlds. How much less for the sake of the earth?

36 What joy will come to us, O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), by killing the sons of Dhṛtarāstra? Only sin will come to us by killing these felons<sup>18</sup>

37 Therefore, it is not meet for us to slay the sons of Dhṛtarāstra with their kinsmen. How, indeed, after killing our own people, can we become full of joy, O Kṛṣṇa (Mādhava)?

38 If these men whose minds are overwhelmed by greed, do not see the evil brought about by the destruction of the family and sin in treachery towards friends,

39 Should it not be known, O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), by us who see well the evil brought about by the destruction of the family, how to recoil from this sin?

40 If the family is destroyed, the eternal family virtues perish. When righteousness is lost, unrighteousness indeed conquers the whole family.

41 As a result of being dominated by unrighteousness, family women get defiled. And when women are defiled, O Kṛṣṇa (Vārṣṇeya), the mixing up of castes will come about.

42 In regard to the destroyers of the family and the family (ruined by them), the mixing up (of castes) makes for hell. The manes of their ancestors will, indeed, fall, deprived of the ceremonial offerings of food and water.

18 'Ātāyīnāḥ', translated as 'felons', refers to persons guilty of six kinds of crimes—arson, poisoning, murder by offensive weapons, robbery with violence, forcible seizure of lands and kidnapping of married women. To kill them is no crime, nor sin according to the *Smṛtis*. (Duryodhana and his brothers and friends were guilty of all the six kinds of crime.)

43 *Caste-duties and eternal family-virtues will be destroyed by these sons of the family-destroyers, which create the confusion of castes*

44 *We hear, O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), that residence in hell becomes permanent for these men, whose family-virtues have been destroyed*

45 *Alas, wick, we are resolved on committing a great sin, since, out of greed for the kingdom and (us) pleasures, we have set out to kill our own kinsmen*

46 *If the sons of Dhrtarāstra, with weapons in their hands, kill me, who am unarmed and have no desire to hit back, that would be far better for me*

### SAÑJAYA SAID

47 *In the midst of (preparations for) war, thus saying, Arjuna, with his mind agitated by grief, threw down his bow, along with the arrows, and sank down on the floor of the chariot*

(Sañjaya continued) "But he, Arjuna (Pārtha), is highminded, extremely compassionate, wide-ranging and unshaken in his family affections and highly righteous<sup>19</sup> In spite of the fact that he, along with his brothers, was very often (sought to be) trapped by the burning of the lac-house<sup>20</sup> and such other cruel murderous devices, when he saw you (i.e. Dhrtarāstra's) men who were about to be killed by him, with the aid of the Supreme Person Himself, he felt thoroughly prostrated in the whole body on account of affection for his kindred, his supreme compassion and fear of (failure to discriminate between) righteousness and unrighteousness and saying, "I shall not fight at all," with his mind distracted by sorrow at the idea of losing his kindred, he threw down his bow along with the arrows and sat down on the floor of the chariot"<sup>21</sup>

19 Arjuna's reluctance to fight against men kinsmen only in name shows him to be high minded His compassion is seen in his unwillingness to hurt even enemies His regard for the moral law and fear of sin indicate his righteousness (T C)

20 Among the attempts made by Duryodhana to trap and kill the Pāṇḍavas, one was to decoy them into a house made of inflammable lac which was later set on fire But they managed to escape (M B I 154-163)

21 Like one bent on *prayopavesa*, sitting down in expectation of death, adds the T C

## CHAPTER II

सञ्जय उवाच—

त तथा कृपयाऽऽविष्टमश्रुपूर्णकुलेक्षणम् ।  
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदन ॥ १ ॥

श्रीमगवानुवाच—

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।  
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥  
क्लैब्य मास्म गम पार्थ नैतत्त्वयुपपद्यते ।  
क्षुद्र हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

SANJAYA SAID

1 To him who was thus overpowered by compassion, whose eyes were full of tears and troubled, and who was despondent, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Madhusūdana) spoke these words

THE LORD SAID

2 Whence has this unworthy weakness, O Arjuna come to you in this trying situation—(a weakness) which is loved by the ignoble, which bars the attainment of Svarga and which brings about disgrace?

3 Do not get into unmanly weakness, O Arjuna (son of Prithā)! That does not become you Give up this base weakness of heart, and arise! O Subduer of foes!

As the son of Prithā (Arjuna) sat thus, the Lord objected reproachfully, “ Whence has come this grief inopportunistically ? ” And He said (to him) “ Rise to fight, giving up completely this grief, which has come in a trying situation, which is courted by the unwise, which is a hindrance to the attainment of (a happy state in) the other world, which is productive of disgrace, which is extremely base and which is caused by weakness of heart ”

The son of Prthā (Arjuna), being agitated by love, pity and fear of sin in what is righteous, and not knowing that what the Lord said was most beneficial, spoke again as follows

**अर्जुन उवाच—**

कथं भीष्ममहं सख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

गुरून् हत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्षमपीह लोके ।

हत्वार्थकामास्तु गुरूनिहैव भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

4 O Kṛṣṇa (Madhusūdana), how can I, in battle, fight with arrows against Bhīṣma and Drona, who deserve to be honoured, O destroyer of enemies?

5 For it were good to live through begging in this world without slaying (these) highly esteemed elders. But, after killing these teachers who love enjoyments, I shall have to enjoy here alone (their very) enjoyments stained with (their) blood.

How shall I kill Bhīṣma, Drona and such other elders who deserve to be greatly respected by me? Even more so, how, after killing these who are very much attached to enjoyments, shall I enjoy the very same enjoyments now being enjoyed by them, sprinkling them with their blood (as with sauce) and seated in their very seats?<sup>22</sup>

न चैतद्विद्य कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामस्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ ६ ॥

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वा धर्मसमूहचेताः ।

यच्छ्रेयं स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वा प्रपन्नम् ॥

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद्यच्छोकमुच्छ्रोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।

अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ ८ ॥

<sup>22</sup> Śrī Rāmānuja explains *pradigdha* in 5 by *upasicya* which refers to sprinkling and also suggests *upasecana* or sauce. One of the meanings of *pradigdha* also is sauce.

6 We do not know which is better for us, in case we win or in case they conquer us. Those very sons of Dhrtarāstra after killing whom we shall not wish to live, stand firm before us

7 With (my) courage<sup>23</sup> fatally hurt by the fault of weakness of spirit, and bewildered (as to my duty), I ask you. Tell me conclusively that which will be good (for me to do). I am your disciple. teach me who have taken refuge with you

8 Indeed, I do not see what (joy) can remove this sorrow which is drying up (my) senses, even after I get on the earth a prosperous kingdom free from enemies and also sovereignty over the gods

If (I am told), "The sons of Dhrtarāstra will forcibly kill you all who, after starting the war, have given up its active pursuit," be it so. It seems to me that even to be killed by these, who do not know what is righteous and what is unrighteous, is better for us than an unrighteous victory obtained by killing them.<sup>24</sup>

After saying so, he (Arjuna) approached the feet of the Lord very much dejected in spirit and with the request, "Tell me, Your disciple who has sought refuge with You, what is ascertained (by You) to be good for me."

**सञ्जय उवाच—**

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेश गुडाकेश परन्तप ।

न योत्स्यामीति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥ ९ ॥

SANJAYA SAID

9 Having thus spoken to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeśa), Arjuna (Gudakeśa)—the subduer of enemies, said (again to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Govinda) "I will not fight", and, strangely enough became silent

Thus, for the sake of Pārtha (Arjuna), whose natural character (of being brave) had been impaired by the oncoming of love and pity

<sup>23</sup> *Stabhāva* (lit. character or one's nature) is rendered here as 'courage' in accordance with the context

<sup>24</sup> Arjuna indicates his preference, but seeks confirmation of his choice

in an inopportune situation, who thought war to be unrighteous even though it was the highest duty of the Kṣatriyas, and who sought refuge (with Śrī Kṛṣṇa) to know what (his) right duty was, the introduction to the science pertaining to the self was taught (lit. made) by the Lord, the Supreme Person, holding that his (Arjuna's) delusion would not be brought to an end except through the knowledge of the real nature of the self and through the knowledge that (fighting in) war, when free from attachment to results, is the means for the realisation of the self. It has been said (by Śrī Yāmunaācārya) "The introduction to the *śāstra* was made for sake of Pārtha (Arjuna), who had sought refuge (with Śrī Kṛṣṇa for instruction) and who, out of love and pity in an inopportune situation, had become troubled with the notion that what was righteous was unrighteous." (G S 5)<sup>25</sup>

तमुवाच हृषीकेश प्रहसन्निव भारत ।

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वच ॥ १० ॥

10 Then O Dhṛtarāṣṭra (descendant of Bharata), Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeśa) said these words, as if smilingly to him (Arjuna), who was desponding between the two armies

The Supreme Person addressed the following words, as it were smilingly,<sup>26</sup> looking at Partha (Arjuna), who was thus overpowered by sorrow arising from ignorance about the real nature of the body and the soul, who was (nevertheless) speaking about duty which is based on knowledge of the soul as distinct from the body, who (in this manner) was possessed of contradictory qualities, and who suddenly became inactive between the two armies that were preparing to fight. The meaning is that He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), as if He spoke in jest, addressed

25 There is a variant reading 'bhaya' for 'dhyā' in 'dharmādharma-dhyāyakaḥ' in G S (5). Both readings are used by Śrī Rāmānuja--'bhaya' towards the end of Chapter I and 'dhyā' here. The teaching 'for the sake of Arjuna' really means that Arjuna was a mere pretext for the Lord to teach the whole world.

26 Smiling, because the teaching is child's play to the Lord, or because He brought about the agitation in the mind of Arjuna to provide a pretext for teaching the world, or because Arjuna's philosophic doubts and essential ignorance provided a ridiculous contrast. The smiling leads to the sarcasm in II 11.



(to Arjuna) the words beginning with,<sup>27</sup> "It is not at all that I once did not exist" (II 12), and ending with "I shall free you from all sins, do not grieve" (XVIII 66)—(words) which included in their scope the essential nature of the self and the Supreme Self, as also the ways (*yogas*) of works (*karma*), knowledge (*jñāna*) and devotion (*bhakti*) which constitute the means for their realisation

**श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—**

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्व प्रज्ञावादाश्च भाषसे ।

गतासूनगतासूश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिता ॥ ११ ॥

THE LORD SAID

*11 You grieve for those who do not deserve to be sorrowed for, and also speak arguments apparently wise. The wise do not feel sorry for the inanimate (bodies) or for those from whom the principle of life cannot depart (i.e., the souls)*

You are sorrowing for those who do not deserve to be sorrowed for. And you also speak arguments based on wisdom about the nature of body and of the self, such as the following: "The manes of the ancestors of these will indeed fall, deprived of the ceremonial offerings of food and water" (I 42). For those who possess the knowledge of the nature of the body and of the self, there is here no cause for grief.

With regard to the inanimate (lit. those whose lives are gone) and those from whom the principle of life cannot depart, that is, (with regard to both) bodies and souls, those who know the truth concerning their natures, do not feel sorry.

Hence there is observable in you this contradiction—the feeling of sorrow at the thought, "I shall kill these," and the talk about what is righteous and what is unrighteous, which is the result of a knowledge of the self as distinct from the body. You do not, therefore, know the nature of the body, nor the self which is distinct from it and eternal, nor the duties like war etc., which form the (natural) means for its

<sup>27</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara regards II 11 as starting the sāstraic teaching. Śrī Rāmānuja's view is that II 11 is intended to arrest attention by sarcasm, so as to prepare the way for the teaching to be begun in II 12.

(the self's) realisation. And this war, when (waged) without any selfish desire for fruits, forms a means for the realisation of the true nature of the self.

The purport (of the teaching) is this. The self, indeed, is not dependent on birth for its existence, nor on death for its destruction, as there is neither birth nor death in its case. It is not therefore an object to be sorrowed for. But the body is insentient, and by nature subject to change, its association with birth and destruction is natural, hence it is, too, not an object to be sorrowed for.<sup>28</sup>

Hear then first about the character of the souls

न त्वेवाह जातु नास न त्व नेमे जनाधिपा ।

न चैव न भविष्याम सर्वे वयमत परम् ॥ १२ ॥

12 It is not at all that once I did not exist, nor (that) you, nor (that) all these kings (did not exist at any time). And surely it is not that all of us shall not be existing hereafter.

I, who am, as you know,<sup>29</sup> the Lord of all, in beginningless time prior to this present, did not cease to exist, that is, did certainly exist. It is not that these souls (lit. knowers in the bodies) like you, who are all subject to (My) control, did not exist, that is, (they) did certainly exist. It is not that "all of us", that is, I and you,<sup>30</sup> 'hereafter', that is, after the present time, shall not be existing: we shall (all) be certainly existing. Even as there is no doubt in regard to the fact that I, the Supreme Self and the Lord of all, am eternal, in the same manner, you (i.e., you, Arjuna and these) who are (all) embodied individual souls, are also to be deemed eternal.

Thus it is seen that the Lord Himself declares that the distinction of the souls from the Lord as well as from one another, is the highest

28 'Gatāsūn' and 'agatāsūn' are usually rendered as 'those who are dead' and 'those who are alive'. The souls being immortal, there is no need for grief in regard to either. Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation links up this verse closely with the forthcoming teaching, differentiating the body from the soul.

29 'As you know' is the force of 'ūrat' in the *bhāṣya*. (T. C.)

30 'Vayam' (all of us) is taken to be 'I and you', in accordance with *Paṇini* (1.2.72) etc.

truth. For, at the time of teaching to one who is bewildered by ignorance—with a view to remove that bewilderment—(when teaching) that the fundamental reality is eternal, there is the distinct mention of “I”, “you”, “these”, “all” and “one” (T. C.).

As regards the doctrine (of Bhāṣkara) that the distinctions are due to limiting conditions, specific reference to distinctions is indeed improper at the time of teaching the truth, for (according to this doctrine) distinctions among the selves are unreal <sup>31</sup>

In the text, “The eternal among those who are eternal, the Intelligent among those who are intelligent, He who, though One, fulfils the desires of the many” (*Svet Up VI 13*), the scripture also declares that the distinctions taught by the Lord are natural. The meaning (of the text quoted above) is that He who is the one (supremely) eternal, intelligent being among many eternal, intelligent beings, fulfils their desires.

But, as regards the doctrine (of the *Advaitins*) that the appearance of distinction arises from ignorance, (it may be pointed out that) it is not proper for the Supreme Person whose vision is of the highest reality and in regard to whom ignorance with its effects has vanished by reason of the apprehension of the essential nature of the Self as undifferentiated, unchangeable, eternal and of the nature of consciousness - (it is not proper for Him) to see distinctions based on ignorance and to carry on such activities as instruction based thereon.

If it is argued that this perception of distinctions on the part of the Supreme Person, who has attained the knowledge of non-dualism, is of the nature of the continued appearance of what has been destroyed, like the configuration of a burnt piece of cloth and such other things,

31 Cf. Śrī Saukara “The plural is used with reference to the distinction among bodies, not because of the opinion that the Self is more than one”

32 In Bhāṣkara's view, the limiting conditions which account for the *Brahman* becoming the world are real. Nevertheless, the distinctions created by these limiting conditions are unreal. For example, a single face or a single moon, when reflected in gems, swords, rivers etc., appears to be many, but is not so. Similarly, in regard to the ether of space, though differentiated by pots, water-jars, etc., which are real, there is no division or differentiation except that due to mere contact with the pots, etc. Hence the differentiation of the all pervading and indivisible *Brahman* into individual selves by real internal organs of sense, etc., is unreal. (T. C.)

and that it cannot produce bondage, the reply is that it does not hold good. The perception of water in a mirage and such other perceptions are undoubtedly a persistent continuance of what has been sublated but they cannot be the cause of activities like fetching water (from the mirage) etc. So also here the knowledge of distinctions, which has been sublated by the knowledge of non-dualism, cannot be the cause of instruction and such other activities, though it may continue to persist. For there is the conviction that it is a subject of an unreal nature<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, it is not possible to say of the Lord (Īśvara) that He was ignorant in the past and that there is a persistent flow of that (ignorance) which has been sublated by means of His becoming the possessor of the knowledge of truth obtained from the *śāstras*. For this is opposed to (the teachings of both) the *Śruti*s and the *Smṛti*s, which are to the following effect — “He who knows all and understands all” (*Mund Up I 2 9*), “His supreme power is indeed revealed as varied and natural and as consisting of knowledge, strength and activity” (*Śvet Up VI 7*), and “O Arjuna, I know all beings, —those that passed away, those that live and those that will come to live — but no one knows Me” (*VII 26*)<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, if the perception of distinctions continues, while there is the conviction that the essential nature of the Self is to be (one and one only) without a second—to whom then, it should be asked, do the Supreme Person and the line of successive teachers to the present day teach this knowledge of the (one and only) Self without a second, which is in accordance with their conviction?

33 A piece of burnt cloth may preserve the illusion of continuing to exist undamaged but it cannot function really as a piece of cloth. This example is claimed to have not been applied to the case in hand, namely, the continued effects of non dualistic belief on one who has achieved the vision of non-dualism. The example of mirage however shows that the continued perception of a sublated illusion cannot lead to action in conformity with the illusion. So, too, one who has achieved the vision of non dualism cannot engage in the activity of teaching, which requires wholehearted belief in dualism.

34 (i) It cannot be that the Lord's knowledge of non dualism is not immediate and direct. He cannot be regarded as having derived this knowledge from texts like, ‘That thou art’ (*Chānd Up VI 8, 7*). (ii) The *Mundaka* text quoted in the context is not tautological, if we understand it to state that the Lord knows all things in all their modes and in the full depth and range of their denotation and connotation.

If it be urged that (the teaching is) for Arjuna and others who are perceived like reflections, it is not appropriate. No man who is not insane, knowing, while the reflections of himself in gems, swords, mirrors etc. are seen, that they are not different from himself, teaches them anything. It is not possible for these even to speak of a persistent flow of that (illusion) which has been sublated. For by the opposing knowledge of the (one and only) Self without a second, the beginningless (entity),<sup>35</sup> which is the cause of the knowledge of things other than the Self, is destroyed.

But, in the case of the cognition of two moons (as a result of some eye diseases), the persistent flow of what is sublated is proper, as the disease like *timira* or any such thing is real and is not destroyed by the knowledge that there is only one moon. But though persistently continuing, it is not productive of any thing (by way of result or activity) on account of its being set aside by very strong authority.<sup>36</sup>

But, here (in the case of Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaching Arjuna), because, the knowledge of distinction with its object as well as its cause not being real, the knowledge of things as real is destroyed, by no means can there arise the persistent flow of that (knowledge of distinctions which has been sublated).

Therefore, if there is the knowledge of ultimate truth in the case of the Lord of all and the line of successive teachers to the present day, then there cannot be the perception of distinctions and the consequent teaching and such other activities (by them). If there is no (such knowledge of ultimate truth), ignorance which is the cause of this (absence of knowledge) prevails, and hence teaching is still more impossible on account of (their being in) the state of ignorant persons.

Moreover, as the *Brahman's* ignorance with its effects is altogether destroyed by means solely of the preceptor's knowledge of the (one and only) Self without a second, the teaching to a disciple is useless. If

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35 T' C notices a variant reading for 'anādi' translated as 'the beginningless (entity)'. This is 'ajñānādi', or 'ignorance and such other things (as the illusion of difference)'.

36 The point here is that the cause of the knowledge of the two moons namely, *timira*, is not affected by the knowledge which sublates it—the knowledge that there is only one moon. The case is different with the knowledge of non-dualism, which destroys not merely the knowledge of dualism but also its beginningless cause.

the preceptor as well as his knowledge is said to be imagined, then the disciple and his knowledge are also imagined therefore this (knowledge of the disciple) cannot be the remover (of ignorance) <sup>37</sup> If the argument is put forward that this (knowledge of the disciple), even though imagined, is a remover (of ignorance), because it is opposed to the earlier (false knowledge), this (argument) is equally applicable to the knowledge of the preceptor Hence it itself (i.e., the knowledge of the disciple) can be a remover (of ignorance) <sup>38</sup> Thus there arises, indeed, a want of significance to the teaching

Suffice it with so much refutation of incorrect doctrines

देहिनोऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कोमार योवन जरा ।

तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ १३ ॥

13 Just as there are for the embodied soul childhood, youth and senility in the body, similarly there is (also) the attainment of another body (after death) One who is brave does not get perplexed at it

37 T' C' points out that the argument is here directed against the school of *Advaitins* who locate *avidyā* in the *Brahman* (They are dealt with at some-length under S B II, 1 15) Some of them hold the view that the *Brahman* associated with *avidyā*, becomes a single *jīva* that the other *jīvas* are the products of his illusion, being like persons seen in a dream, and that on his awakening to true knowledge, the universe ceases to be, like the dream world Four alternatives now present themselves in the context of Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaching Arjuna The teacher may be either this *jīva* or one 'seen' by him the same is the case with the disciple also If Śrī Kṛṣṇa is that single *jīva*, on becoming enlightened, He could not teach But if He is an imagined *jīva*, then His knowledge cannot bring the universe to an end, even as the knowledge of a person seen in a dream cannot stop the dream But His knowledge may well help some one else to acquire enlightenment If it is argued that teaching is possible this way, the answer is that, there being nothing to indicate that Arjuna is the single *jīva*, he too is only an imagined self Both the teacher and the disciple being imagined, there is no point in teaching or being taught

38 There seems to be here a reference to the *apacchedanyāya* of P M (VI 5 49-55) The injunction imposing a penance for an earlier disconnection between the officiating priests connected together in a chain in the *Prātassavana* sacrifice is stultified by that in regard to a later disconnection In the same way, the scriptural texts denying attributes to the *Brahman* are of greater authority than those affirming attributes It may be said that Arjuna's later knowledge, derived from the teaching of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, can remove his earlier ignorance The answer is that Arjuna's ignorance, being later than the teacher's knowledge, may as well controvert that knowledge (T' C')

Because of the conviction that the soul is enduring one does not regret that the soul is lost, when an embodied soul dwelling in a body gives up the state of childhood and attains youth and other states; similarly, indeed, the wise man, knowing the soul to be enduring, does not grieve, when there is (for the soul) the attainment of another body from (this) body. Hence, as the souls are eternal, the souls are not (fit) objects for grief.

This much is what ought to be done here. The eternal souls, on account of their being subject to beginningless *karma*, become endowed with bodies suitable to their respective *karman*s. In order to get rid of (the) bondage (of *karma*), they perform, with the aid of these same bodies, and without attachment to results, war and such other duties and rites as are prescribed in the *śāstras* and are appropriate to one's caste. (Even to such aspirants for emancipation) contacts of sense-objects with the senses (in the course of the performance of their duties) become the bestowers of pleasure and pain, arising from cold, heat and such other experiences, as they are unavoidable. But these (pleasurable and other sensations) are to be borne calmly till the duties enjoined in the *śāstras* are accomplished. (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains this matter immediately afterwards.

मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदा ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तास्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

11 *Contacts with the material objects of the senses, O Arjuna (Kauṇṭeya), are the producers of cold and heat, and pleasure and pain (therefrom). They are transient, subject to coming and going. Endure them patiently, O Arjuna (Bhārata)!*

As sound, touch, form, taste and smell, along with their substrata are the products of *tanmātras* (or subtle elements), they are called (here) *mātrās*<sup>39</sup>. Contact with these through the ear and other senses gives rise to (the feelings of) pleasure and pain in the form of (the sensations of) heat, cold, softness, hardness etc. The expression, 'cold and heat', is illustrative (and intended to signify also other sensations like those felt when struck by weapons). Endure these with fortitude till the completion of war and such other works prescribed in the *śāstras*.

39 The term 'mātra' in 'matrasparśah' has been interpreted in various ways—the senses (Śrī Śaṅkara), the objects of the senses (Śrī Mādhva), and the 'qualities' known as *sāttva*, *rajas* and *tamas* belonging to matter.

And as these are characterised by 'coming and going', they are fit to be borne patiently by the brave. They are also 'transient' <sup>40</sup> when the *karma* which is the cause of bondage is destroyed, they cease to be characterised even by coming and going.

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now explains for what purpose the forbearance of these is necessary

य हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुष ध्रुवर्षभ ।

समदुःखसुख धीर सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

15 *That steadfast man, O Arjuna (best of men), whom these (contacts) do not harass, and to whom pain and pleasure are the same, he qualifies for immortality*

That man endowed with steadfastness, who looks upon unavoidable pain as like unto pleasure, and who performs without attachment to results war and such other works suited to his caste, as a means for the attainment of immortality—him the fall of weapons and such other soft or harsh contacts which are involved in this (performance of war and other works) do not harass. The meaning is that he alone attains immortality, and not a person like you who cannot bear hardship <sup>41</sup>. As the souls are immortal, what has to be done here extends so far (i.e. to endurance only and not to grief). This is the gift.

The immortality of the souls and the natural destructibility of bodies, which were pointed out as opposed to any justification for (Arjuna's) sorrow in the words, "The wise do not feel sorry for the inanimate (bodies) or for those from whom the principle of life cannot depart (i.e., the souls)" (II-11)—these it is which Śrī Kṛṣṇa begins to elucidate (next)

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सत ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

16 *To that which is not, there is no existence; to that which is, there is no non-existence. The (true) conclusion about both these is discerned by the seers of the truth.*

<sup>40</sup> The description as 'transient' (*anityah*) is intended to allay the doubt that there may be a never ending stream of 'coming and going'.

<sup>41</sup> The tinge of irony behind the address as 'O best of men' (*purusarabha*) is here brought out.



'To that which is not' (i.e., is not enduringly existent), namely, the body, there is no existence 'To that which is' (i.e., is enduringly existent), namely, the self, there is no non-existence. The (true) conclusion about both these, the body and the self, which are perceived (by us), is discerned in accordance with experience by the seers of the truth.<sup>42</sup> As the investigation has here reached a definitive conclusion, the final determination (of the investigation) is here pointed out by the word, 'conclusion' ('*anta*') The meaning is that the definitive conclusion has been reached that non-existence alone is the real nature of the body, which is non-intelligent matter, and that existence alone is the real nature of the intelligent soul.<sup>43</sup>

Non-existence is indeed the character of destructibility, and existence is the character of indestructibility. As the Venerable Parasara has said "Therefore, O Brahmin, there does not exist, other than intelligence, any group of things anywhere and at any time. Thus it has been taught to you by me what is real existence and how intelligence is real and all else is unreal" (V P II, 12 43, 45), "The highest reality is regarded as indestructible by the wise. There is no doubt that what is obtained through destructible substances is also destructible" (*Ibid* II 14 24), and "That thing which even by a change in time does not come to possess a different designation brought about by modification and such other changes in form as it, O king, anything (obtainable in the visible universe)?" (*Ibid* II, 13, 100)<sup>44</sup>

To the same effect here also it is said 'These bodies (are said to) have an end' (II 18), and "Know however that to be impishable" (II 17). It is seen (from the foregoing) that this alone (i.e., the destructibility of the body and the indestructibility of the soul) is the cause for the designations of 'existence' and 'non-existence'. In this context, as there is no relevance for the doctrine

42 Cf. Śrī Śankara "All is the Brahman, Tat is His name, the quality of being Tat is *tatva*, (it is) the truth about the Brahman those who can see this (truth) are the seers of truth."

43 Śrī Rāmānuja presently quotes V P to sustain his interpretation of 'sat' and 'asat'.

44 V P illustrates the description of the self and insentient matter by such terms as '*astu*' and '*asatu*', '*satya*' and '*asatya*', etc. In the last verse quoted, the question asked is rhetorical, the sense being that there is no such thing among the visible entities.

holding that effects are present (in the cause),<sup>45</sup> this stanza has no reference to it

What is to be taught to one who (like Arjuna) is perplexed about knowledge of the true nature of the body and of the soul, in order to destroy this perplexity, is discrimination in the natures of the two as characterised by destructibility and indestructibility. This (teaching) is introduced by the words, "For the inanimate (bodies) or for those from whom the principle of life cannot depart (i.e., the souls)" (II 11). It is again this (teaching about the destructibility of bodies and the indestructibility of the self) which is made clear immediately by the words, "Know however that to be imperishable" (II 17) and "These bodies are said to have an end" (II 18). The meaning is therefore as explained above.

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches how the indestructibility of the self is to be understood

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित् कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १७ ॥

17 Know however that to be imperishable by which all this (material universe) is pervaded. None can bring about the destruction of this, which is indestructible.

Know that—the principle of the self—to be imperishable by which principle of the self which is sentient, the whole of this insentient principle (of matter) is pervaded, that is, penetrated.

45 This doctrine, common to the Sāṅkhya and some schools of the Vedānta and known as the *sat karyā vāda*, holds that something cannot come out of nothing. *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* (1X) of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, as translated by Dr Jha, thus states it: "The effect is an entity (i) because a non-entity can never be brought into existence, (ii) because of a (determined) relation of the cause (with the effect), (iii) because everything cannot be possible (by any and every means), (iv) because a competent (cause) can do (only) that for which it is competent, and (v) lastly, because the effect is non-different from the cause." Vāchaspati Miśra quotes this verse of the *Gītā* in support in his commentary thereon. Though Śrī Rāmānuja accepts the *sat karyā vāda*, he holds that there is no reference to it here. For, as T. C. points out, it will be absurd to try to establish the immortality of the souls from the unproven assumption of the immortality of all things.

The self is surpassingly subtle on account of its pervasiveness, and is (hence) incapable of destruction. Therefore, no substance other than itself<sup>46</sup> can bring about destruction (to it), because such (other) substance is capable of being penetrated by it (the self) and hence is grosser than it. For destroying agents like weapons, water, air, fire etc. penetrate the things to be destroyed (by them) and disintegrate them. Even hammers and similar instruments generate air currents by violent contact and through them cause destruction. The principle of the self (which is impenetrable) is therefore indestructible.

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now states that, on the other hand, destructibility is alone the characteristic of bodies.

अस्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताश्शरीरिण ।

अनाशिजोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥ १८ ॥

18 These bodies of the possessor of the body (i.e., the soul), who is eternal, indestructible and incapable of being the object of knowledge, are said to have an end. Therefore, fight, O Arjuna (Bhārata)!

'*Deh*' means 'to grow'. Hence these *dehas* (bodies)<sup>47</sup> are things which are marked by growth. They have an end that is, they have the attribute of perishability. For pots and such other things which have the characteristic of growth are seen to have an end. The bodies of the embodied soul are made of the combinations of elements of matter for the purpose of experiencing the effects of *karma*, as stated in scriptural texts like "Auspiciousness (in embodiment) is to be attained through the auspicious (actions)" (*Bṛh Uṇ* IV 4 5), and (these bodies) are perishable at the termination of *karma*.

But the self is indestructible. Why? Because it is incapable of being the object of knowledge. Surely, the self is not to be seen as the object of knowledge, but only as the knower. It will be taught so (later in the *Gītā*). "Those who know it (i.e., the self) speak of him who knows this (body) as the *kṣhetrajña* (the knower of the field)" (XIII 1).

46 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara: "Nothing, not even the Lord has the power to destroy the Self."

47 'These bodies' refer to all bodies other than that of the speaker. His body is divine and not subject to *karma*. (T C)

And the self is not discerned as (made up of) many (parts) or as subject to growth. Because in the experience, "I am the knower", throughout the body, only some one other than the body is understood as possessing one invariable form as the knower. Moreover, difference in the configuration of the knower is not seen in different places as in the case of the body and such objects.

Therefore the self is eternal, because it is not subject to growth on account of having a single (invariable) form (not made up of the elements), because it is of the nature of the knower, and because it has the character of being the pervader. The body, on the contrary, is perishable because it is subject to growth, because it is intended for the experience of the fruits of *karma* by the embodied soul, because it is multiform, and because it is of the character of being the pervaded.<sup>48</sup>

'Hence', for the reason that the body is by nature perishable and the soul is by nature eternal, both are not objects fit to be sorrowed over. Therefore, bearing with fortitude the unavoidable descent of weapons and such other harsh contacts, received by you as well as by others, begin for the sake of attaining immortality the action known as war without being attached to fruits.

य एन वेत्ति हन्तार यश्चैन मन्यते हतम् ।

उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नाय हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १९ ॥

19 He who in regard to this (soul), looks upon (something or other) as the cause of slaying, and he who believes this (soul) to be slain (by some cause or other) both these do not know (the truth). Neither does such (cause) slay (the soul), nor is such (soul) slain.

In regard to 'this' self whose nature has been described above, he who looks upon something or other as the 'slayer', that is, as the cause of slaying, and he who believes 'this' (self) to be the slain

48 There are here four syllogisms about the self, and four about the body. The self is eternal, (i) because it is not compounded of material elements, (ii) because it has no parts, (iii) because it is the knower and enjoyer of the fruits of *karma*, and (iv) because it is the pervader. The body is mortal, (v) because it is compounded of material elements, (vi) because it has many parts, (vii) because it is intended for the enjoyment of the fruits of *karma* (by the self), and (viii) because it is subject to pervasion. Possible objections to these syllogisms are examined and refuted at some length by 'T' C.

through some reason or other—both these do not know (the truth) As it (i.e., the self) is eternal for the reasons mentioned, this (i.e., the self or any weapon) cannot be the cause of killing For the same reason 'this' (self) cannot be slain <sup>49</sup>

The verbal root, 'han' (to slay), though it has the self for its object, (in this verse) indicates causing the separation of the body (from the self) Scriptural injunctions like "You shall not cause injury to beings" <sup>(1)</sup> and "The Brahmin shall not be killed" <sup>(2)</sup> relate to unauthorised acts causing the separation of a body (from a soul)

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नाय भूत्वा भविता वा न भूय ।

अजो नित्य शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ २० ॥

20 Neither is this (self) ever born, nor does (it) ever die It cannot be that it (i.e., this self), having been in existence (in the past), will not be in existence again (in the future) This (self), which is unborn eternal, constant and ancient (as well as new), is not slain when the body is slain

It is (now) pointed out that, as the self is eternal for the reasons mentioned, and hence free from evolutionary changes, all the attributes of the insentient (body) like birth, death etc., do not exist (for it) There, as the statement, "Neither this (self) is ever born, nor does (it ever) die", is in the present tense, (it is meant that) the birth and death, which are being experienced by all in all bodies, do not ever touch the soul "It cannot be that this (self) having been brought into existence (in the past) will not be in existence again (in the future)" That is, this (self), having come into existence at the beginning of a *kalpa*, will not cease to be at the end of the *kalpa* The meaning is

49 This differs only slightly from *Aph Up* (II 19) which may be rendered thus "If one thinks to kill, considering one to be the killer, and if one, being killed, thinks that one is killed, both these do not know (the truth) He (i.e., individual self) is not the killer, nor is he killed" Sri Rāmānuja does not regard *B G* (II 18) as exactly identical in purport The context here demands that the teaching is about a self being slain by weapons and such causes Among 'such causes', another self has also to be included Sri Sankara takes *bandāram* as 'him who is the agent of the act of killing' *T C* explains at length the reasons behind Sri Rāmānuja's view (Compare also *S B* (II 3 33))

that birth at the beginning of a *kalpa* in bodies such as those of *Prajāpatis* and others and death (therein) at the end of the *kalpa*, as made out from the scripture, do not at all concern the self<sup>50</sup>

Therefore, the soul, which is in all bodies, is unborn, and hence eternal. It is constant, not involved, like matter, in indistinct mutations incessantly taking place (even in *pralaya*). It is (again) *purāṇa* (ancient). This means that, though of the past, it is ever new and capable of being experienced always as surprisingly new<sup>51</sup>

Therefore, when the body is slain, the soul is not slain

वेदाविनाशिन नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 He who knows this (self) to be indestructible, unborn, immutable and (hence) eternal in what manner and whom, O Arjuna (Pārtha), does he cause to be killed, and whom does he kill?

He who knows the self to be eternal, on account of its being indestructible, unborn and incapable of undergoing changes—how can that person cause any self whatever among the selves existing in the bodies of gods, men, animals and immovable things to be killed? And whom again does he kill? That is, how does he destroy, and how does he become the instigator of such (killing)?

50 B. G. (II. 20) has a parallel in *Kaṣh. Up.* (II. 18) which may be rendered thus: "The (potentially) omniscient one (i.e., the individual self) is neither born, nor does (it) die. It is not (produced) from something, and it did not become something. It is unborn, immortal, eternal (without having an origin) and ancient. It is not killed when the body is killed. Here also Śrī Rāmānuja interprets the *Gīta* verse so as to suit the context, making it refute the view that the individual selves perish in the dissolution of the universe and that the immortality attributed to them only refers to their comparative longevity. "A *kalpa* is a period of time equal to 4,320 million solar years. It is a day of the creating Brahman, and his night is also of equal duration. At the beginning of each *kalpa*, the creation of the world is said to begin, and at the end of each *kalpa* happens the destruction of the whole world" (*S. B.*, Vol. 1, p. 211). For *Prajāpatis*, see Glossary.

51 The second line is a conclusion based on the first line. The word, 'āśvata', rendered as 'constant', is interpreted by contrast with the changefulness of *prakṛti* or matter even in the state of dissolution. Even when the souls are promiscuously mixed up with matter in *pralaya*, they are not involved in the changes going on in matter.

Hence the purport is that the feeling of sorrow, "I cause the destruction of these selves, I kill (these)", has its roots solely in ignorance about the true nature of the self

Let it be conceded that what is done (by way of killing) is only the separation of bodies from eternal selves. Even so, when bodies which are the means for the experience of pleasant enjoyments perish, (it may be argued) there still exists cause for sorrow in separation from these (bodies). To this He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) replies here

वासासि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि सयाति नवानि देही ॥ २२ ॥

22 *As a man discards worn-out clothes and puts on others that are new, similarly the self (lit the owner of the body), discarding worn-out bodies, gets into others that are new.*

The taking up of a body more auspicious than the one given up in respect of those who give up their bodies in a righteous war is evident from the *śāstras*. Hence there is to be seen here only a cause for joy, as in the case of those who discard worn-out clothes and put on others which are new and auspicious

Once again He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) points out for the sake of easy comprehension the indestructibility of the self, which has been taught earlier in the statement, "Know however that to be imperishable by which all this (material universe) is pervaded" (II 17), and confirms (it)

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ २३ ॥

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यस्सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयः सनातनः ॥ २४ ॥

23 *Weapons do not cut this (self). fire does not burn it and water does not wet it, nor does the wind dry (it).*

24 *It is incapable of being cut, it is incapable of being burnt, incapable of being wetted and indeed incapable of being dried. It is eternal present everywhere, fixed, free from movement, and perennial*

Weapons, fire, water and air are not able to effect cutting, burning, wetting and drying as against the self. Because, the nature of the self being to pervade all elements (i.e., the material constituents of the universe), it is present everywhere because of its being subtler than all the elements, it is incapable of being pervaded by them, and because also cutting, burning, wetting and drying are all operations which can be carried out (only) by that which is pervaded (and is hence subtler than the pervader)<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the 'self' is eternal. "It is fixed, free from motion, and perennial." That is, by nature it is unchanging, unshakable and unborn (lit. ancient).

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।

तस्मादेव विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २५ ॥

25 *This (self) is said to be non-manifest, inconceivable, and immovable. Hence after knowing it to be such, it does not become you to feel sorry*

This self is not made manifest by those means of knowledge by which material objects, capable of being cut and undergoing similar operations, are made manifest hence it is non-manifest. And it is inconceivable, being different in kind from what is capable of undergoing cutting and similar operations. As it is different in kind from all material objects, it cannot be thought of as possessing the essential quality of any of them. Hence it is immovable, absolutely incapable of modifications.<sup>53</sup>

Therefore, after knowing this self to be possessed of the above-mentioned attributes, it does not become you to feel sorry for its sake.

52 What is stated under II. 18 is recalled here. The subtler alone can destroy the grosser.

53 The immortality of the self is indicated by the self being unlike any mortal thing. Though it is known through perception in the mind, it is unlike all other perceived objects. This unlikeness, *T. C.* points out, is dissimilar from the unlikeness which certain logical reasoners find between the seeds in the granary and the seeds sown in the field. Hence, inferences put forward by Buddhists to the effect that the self is momentary because whatever is existent is momentary are rejected. The self is eternal and unchangeable, (i) because there is nothing to contradict what has been taught so far, or (ii) because there is nothing to prove that it is changeable, as in the case of the nature of God and unlike in the case of the pot, or (iii) because nothing can be taken to be of that kind for which there is no proof, even as what is blue cannot be taken to be yellow. The immovability of the self is absolute and valid at all times.



अथ चैन नित्यजात नित्य वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।

तथाऽपि त्व महाबाहो नैव शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २६ ॥

26 Or if you consider this (self) as being, indeed, ever born and as ever undergoing death, even then, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), it does not become you to feel sorry in this way

Or, if you consider this self to be, indeed, the body, which is ever being born and ever undergoing death—for nothing other than the body possesses the characteristics mentioned above—even then it does not become you to feel very sorry. For birth and death are unavoidable by the body, whose nature is mutability

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुव जन्म मृतस्य च ।

तस्मादपरिहार्ये न त्व शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २७ ॥

27 For death is, indeed, certain to that which is born, and also birth is certain to that which has met with death. Therefore, it does not become you to feel sorry in relation to a thing which is unavoidable.

To whatever is produced, destruction is certain, that is, is seen to be unavoidable. Similarly, unavoidable also is birth to whatever has perished. How, it may be asked, is this to be accepted by the understanding—that there is birth to that which has perished? For birth can be perceived only in relation to that which is existent, and cannot be perceived in relation to that which is non-existent. (The answer is this). Birth, death and such other phenomena are merely particular states of a real substance

Now, thread and such other things do really exist. When subject to particular arrangements, they are called clothes etc. What amounts to this is understood even by those who uphold the doctrine<sup>54</sup> that

54 The reference is to the Naiyāika doctrine of *asatkīrya vāda*, which holds that the effect is altogether new and something different from the cause. T. C. points out that the holder of this doctrine is here described as feeling a contradiction between what he perceives and what he has to argue as his doctrine. Two questions are posed against him. Is there anything which can be perceived as made up of several parts, apart from those parts? (That is, is there a whole apart from the parts of which it is composed?) Or is the whole to be a construct of the mind? Śrī Rāmanuja replies to both these by considering the case of the threads and the cloth which they make up. The cloth is not seen apart from the threads, indeed, a sufficiently long single thread, as T. C. states, can make a piece of cloth. It is not proper to postulate a separate substance, apart from the threads, as cloth, when the threads are seen to form the cloth after undergoing some operations. New states can arise for a substance, but not a new substance as a result of causal operations.

the effect is a non-entity (before the operation of the cause). There (in the above example), no other new substance over and above the particular configuration of threads is perceived. It is not proper to assume the existence of a new substance, since, in consequence of the process of manufacture (to which the threads are subjected), only the attainment of a new name and a special function are observed and nothing more.

Thus, origination, destruction etc. are particular states of an existent substance. In regard to a substance which has entered into the state known as origination, the passage to another condition opposed to it is called destruction. To an evolving substance, a succession of evolutionary states is unavoidable, as the state of being a (mud) lump, that of being a pot, that of being a potsherd, that of being powder and such other states are (unavoidable) in the case of the same substance, clay. Therein (i.e., among such mutations) destruction is the attainment of a succeeding (new) state by a substance which exists in a preceding state. And this itself is birth to it (the substance) in that (new) state.

The successive flow of mutations called birth and destruction being unavoidable in this manner to an evolving substance, it is not proper for you to sorrow thereat.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) says that even the slight sorrow arising from seeing an existent substance pass from a previously existing condition to another which is opposed to it, is not justified in regard to human and such other bodies (lit. beings).

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।

अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ २८ ॥

28. (All) beings (in the universe), O Arjuna (Bhārata)! have an unknown beginning, a known middle and certainly an unknown end. Why should there be any sorrow in relation to them?

Men and such other beings (i.e., human and other bodies) exist as substances that are of unknown previous states, of known middle states in the form of men and such other beings, and of unknown future states: (and as such) they always obey their own nature<sup>53</sup>. There is therefore no cause for sorrow in relation to them.

53. The nature that all beings (i.e., bodies) follow is that of mutability. T. O. elaborately discusses many alternatives and shows that Arjuna ought not to feel sorry, even from the standpoint of the materialist.

After thus pointing out that even according to the view which identifies the body with the soul, there is no cause for sorrow, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) declares that with reference to the self, which is distinct from the body and is of a wonderful nature, one who has seen or one who has heard or one who has described (it) or one with determinate knowledge (about it) based even on the testimony of hearsay is hardly to be found

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनमाश्चर्यवद्ब्रूयति तथैव चान्य ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्य शृणोति श्रुत्वाऽप्येन वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९ ॥

29 A certain person sees this (soul) as full of wonder In the same manner another also speaks of it as full of wonder Again, another hears of it as full of wonder And even after hearing of it, none indeed knows it

Among the countless creatures (of the universe), someone, through great penance, gets rid of sins and augments his store of religious merit and then he sees this (self), which is endowed with the characteristics mentioned before and which remains seeming marvellous by being different in kind from all things other than itself Someone of the above kind speaks (of it) to another In this manner, indeed, someone hears of it And even after hearing of it, none knows it in truth as it really exists The word, 'and' (*cha*), implies that even in respect of the seer, the speaker and the hearer, it is difficult to find vision according to truth, speech according to truth and hearing according to truth <sup>56</sup>

देही नित्यमवध्योऽय देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।

तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्व शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ ३० ॥

30 In the body of everyone, O Arjuna (Bhārata), the embodied self is always indestructible Therefore, it is not proper for you to feel sorry for all beings

56 This verse recalls *Kaṣh Up* (II 7) "He (the Supreme Self) who is not heard of even by many and whom those who have heard (about Him) do not know—wonderful is one who speaks (about Him), skilful is he who attains (Him), wonderful is he who knows Him, having been taught by a skilful preceptor." But the differentiation of the self from others being the topic in the context, Śrī Rāmānuja interprets in this way Śrī Śankara has an alternative interpretation also he who sees, hears about or speaks about the self is wonderful

In the body of everyone of the embodied beings such as the gods etc., this embodied self must be considered to be eternally indestructible. Therefore, all beings, from the gods to the immovable things, even though they possess different forms, are all uniform and eternal in their essential nature, on account of the characteristic described before. The inequality and perishability pertain only to the body. Therefore, it is not proper for you to feel sorry in relation to all beings from the gods downwards, and not merely in relation to Bhishma and such others <sup>57</sup>

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।

धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत् क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥ ३१ ॥

31 Again, seeing also (the nature of) your own duty, it does not become you to falter. To a Kṣatriya, indeed, there is nothing more auspicious than a righteous war.

Moreover, in regard to this war which has commenced, even though there is in it the slaying of life, it is not proper for you to falter, seeing your own duty (therein) as in the *agniṣomiya* and other sacrifices. To a Kṣatriya indeed there is nothing more auspicious than a righteous war, (that is, a war) begun in a just cause. It will indeed, be declared (later in the *Gītā*) : "Valour, glory, fortitude, skill as also not running away in battle, munificence and masterfulness—this is the function of the Kṣatriya arising from his innate disposition" (XVIII 43)

In the *Agniṣomiya* and such other sacrifices, no injury is done to the animal sacrificed, because the *Śruti* declares that the giving up (by the sacrificial victim) of an inferior type of body such as that of the goat etc. precedes the attainment of an auspicious body and of *Śvarga* and such other happy results. The teaching of the *Śruti* about

57 (1) The embodied selves are seen to be distinct not merely in respect of their bodies, but also in respect of the joy or misery which are felt by them and which appertain to the selves. Nevertheless the distinctions in regard to joy, misery, etc., are based on the association of the selves with the bodies. The selves are referred to as gods, men, or animals, because the bodies of gods, men etc. cannot exist apart from the selves. Hence it follows that all selves are equal and similar. (ii) With this verse ends the teaching intended to remove the misplaced pity and sorrow of Arjuna. The next four verses seek to resolve his doubts on what his duty is and what is sin. (T. C.)

sacrificial killing is. " (O sacrificial victim) by this (death as a sacrificial victim), you never die at all, you are not killed) You will go through blissful paths to the gods, where the virtuous only reach and not the sinful. And there, may Savitri (the sun-god) establish you ! " (*Taitt Br* III 7.2)

Similarly, the attainment of more auspicious bodies by those who die here in (this) war has been declared in (the verse beginning with) " As a man discards worn-out clothes and puts on others that are new " (II 22) Hence, just as lancing and such other operations of a surgeon are for (the protection of) a suffering patient, the killing (of the sacrificial victim) in *Agniṣomīya* and such other sacrifices is only for its protection <sup>58</sup>

यदृच्छया चोपपन्न स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।

सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥ ३२ ॥

32 O Arjuna (*Pārtha*), only fortunate *Kṣatriyas* meet with such a war as this, which has accidentally arisen and is an open doorway of entrance into Heaven

It is only the fortunate *Kṣatriyas*, that is, those with a store of religious merit, who meet with such a war as this, which has come unsought, which is the means for the attainment of unsurpassed bliss and which is unobstructed.<sup>59</sup>

अथ चेत्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३३ ॥

33 If then you will not fight this war which is (your) duty, you will be giving up your duty and honour and then will acquire sin

58 The injury done to the sacrificial victim does not cause sin. This analogy is given in order to convince Arjuna of the righteous duty of war even though it involves killing. Several theories about sacrificial killing are discussed in *S B* (III 1 25). Śrī Rāmānuja's view is that sacrificial killing is no injury at all, as it leads the soul of the victim to blissful worlds. Similarly, if Arjuna kills anyone in the war, the soul of the killed person will go to *Svarga* hence Arjuna's killing anyone in war is no sin.

59 The doors of Heaven being kept open indicates that the passage to Heaven is unobstructed. *Sukhinah* (lit the happy ones) are taken to be the fortunate ones, and their luck consists in the opportunity that comes to them such luck is due to the accumulated store of the effects of good actions.

If, out of delusion, you will not fight this war, which has started and which forms the legitimate duty of a Ksatriya (like you), then owing to your not performing the duty that has been begun, you will forfeit the unsurpassed bliss which is the fruit (of the performance) of your duty and the unsurpassed glory arising from victory, and will acquire unsurpassed sin <sup>60</sup>

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।

सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिः मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४ ॥

34 Moreover, even all beings will speak of your everlasting disgrace and to a man of honour, disgrace is worse than death

To you there will be not merely the loss of unsurpassed happiness and glory, but also all beings, the competent and even the incompetent, will speak of your everlasting disgrace, extending over all times and places by saying "When the battle began, Arjuna (Pārtha) ran away" Suppose it were asked what if it be so? To a man who is honoured by all for courage, heroic prowess, valour and such other virtues, the disgrace arising from (the attribution to him of) the reverse of these (qualities) would be worse than (lit surpass) death That is for you death itself would become preferable to this kind of disgrace <sup>61</sup>

To the question (of Arjuna), "How could disgrace fall on me, who am heroic, but have retired from the battle only out of mercy and love for my relatives?"—He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here replies

भयाद्रणादुपरत मन्यन्ते त्वा महारथाः ।

येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥ ३५ ॥

35 The warriors of the great chariot will think of you as having withdrawn through fear from the battle to whom you will (hereafter) appear unworthy, having been (hitherto) highly thought of

60. (1) 'Dharmya' is taken as 'dharma' or duty (11) The *kīrti* (or 'honour') which is given up is taken to be that to be won by victory in this war Śrī Sāṅkara finds there a reference to the glory won in the past by such deeds as the fight with Śiva

61 The verse has both 'cha' and 'api', two words meaning 'and' or 'also' Śrī Rāmānuja therefore takes 'api' in the sense of 'even' and applies it to 'beings' thus we get the reference to the competent and the incompetent Again, death is preferable to dishonour according to the Kṣatriya code Moreover, while death in war makes for heaven, disgrace leads to hell (T C)

To whom, that is, to Karna, Duryodhana and such other (well known) warriors of the great chariot, having been hitherto highly thought of, to the effect that you were a heroic enemy—(to them) now, when the battle has actually begun, by refraining from engaging (in it), you will become contemptible and (in their opinion) easily capturable. These warriors of the great chariot will think of you as having kept back from the battle through fear. For keeping back from battle does not happen in the case of brave enemies through affection and such other feelings towards kins-men, but only through fear of foes.

अवाच्यवादाश्च बहून् वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिता ।

निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६ ॥

36 *Slighting your skill (in war), your enemies will also speak many unspeakable slanders. Is there, indeed, anything more painful than this?*

Moreover, your enemies, the sons of Dhṛtarāstra, will speak (about you) many slanders unutterable about heroic warriors, slighting your ability thus: "In the presence of us, who are heroes, how can this Arjuna (Pārtha) stand even for a moment? His (boasted) skill (in war) is, indeed, elsewhere than in our presence." Is there anything more painful to you than this? Even death is preferable to hearing slanders of this kind—so you yourself will come to think.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) next says that, to a brave warrior, both the enemies being killed by him and himself being killed by the enemies are conducive to happiness.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय । युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७ ॥

37 *If killed (in battle) you will attain Heaven or having won, you will rule over the earth. Therefore, arise, O Arjuna (son of Kuntī), making up your mind firmly for war.*

In a just war, if (you are) killed by enemies, you will thereby surely attain supreme (heavenly) bliss. Or, killing the enemies, you will enjoy unobstructed sovereignty.

As the duty known as war, when accomplished without attachment to the fruits, becomes the means for the attainment of supreme (heavenly) bliss, you will attain, indeed, this supreme (heavenly) bliss. Therefore, arise, being convinced that engaging in war is the means for

attaining the highest object of human pursuit known as salvation. This alone is proper for you, the son of Kuntī. Such is the purport.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa next) explains the course of conduct to be pursued in war by one who is desirous of attaining salvation.

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।

ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैव पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३८ ॥

38 Therefore, making pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat seem the same, prepare yourself for the battle. By doing so, you will not incur misery (lit. sin).

Thus, after knowing the self to be eternal, distinct from the body and thoroughly untouched by the (common) characteristics of all bodies, keeping the mind unaffected by the pleasure and pain arising from the unavoidable fall of weapons and the like in war, as well as by gain and loss of wealth and by victory and defeat, being free from attachment to *Śvarga* and such other fruits, and holding it merely to be what ought to be done, beging the battle. Doing thus, you will incur no sin, you will not be involved in the sin, that is, the circuit of birth and death which is misery.<sup>62</sup> The meaning is that you will be freed from the bondage of *samsāra*.

Thus, after teaching the knowledge of the real nature of the self, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) begins to teach *karma yoga* (or the discipline of works), which, when preceded by it (i.e., knowledge of the nature of the self), forms the means for salvation.<sup>63</sup>

एषा तेऽभिहिता साङ्ख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमा शृणु ।

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ ! कर्मबन्ध प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥

39 This, which has been said to you so far, is the attitude of the mind in regard to (attaining knowledge of) the self. Listen to this (other attitude) in regard to yoga, by adopting which you will cast away the bondage of karma.

62. 'Papa' generally means sin. In this verse, it is rendered as the misery which is *samsāra*, because (i) it cannot be the sin feared by Arjuna in killing teachers and others as that doubt has been cleared, (ii) it cannot be sin committed in the past, as the future is referred to, and (iii) it cannot be the later sin of a man practising *bhakti-yoga*, as that discipline is not now being taught to Arjuna. It can only be the effects of *puṇya* and *pāpa* which obstruct the attainment of salvation (T. C.)

63. The attainment of salvation takes place in due course. Refraining from sinful deeds leads to distaste for *samsāra*, this leads in turn to refraining from activities which tend to continue the bondage, and so on.



'*Sankhyā*' means the intellect. The principle of the self which is ascertainable by the *sankhyā* or the intellect is '*sāṅkhyam*'. As the principle of the self has to be known, whatever attitude of mind has to be taught for obtaining knowledge concerning it, even that (attitude) has been taught to you in the passage beginning from "It is not at all that I did not exist" (II 12) and ending with "Therefore, it is not proper for you to feel sorry for all beings" (II-30)

Whatever disposition of mind has to be spoken of in regard to the performance of works, which, preceded by a knowledge of the self, forms the means for the attainment of salvation, that (disposition of mind), indeed, is here signified by the word, '*yoga*'. It will, indeed, be said later on, "Far inferior, indeed, is work to the attitude of mind" (II 49) Whatever attitude of mind has to be spoken of in regard to this *yoga*, listen to it being said now <sup>64</sup> By practically adopting that attitude of mind, you will get rid of the bondage of *karma*. The bondage caused by *karma* is the bondage of *karma* and hence it means *samsāra* (the circuit of births and deaths)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains the greatness of work associated with the attitude of mind to be explained

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

40 Here there is no loss of the initial effort, nor is there any sin (even if there be a break or cessation in the undertaking) Even a little of this moral discipline affords protection against (the) great terror (of *samsāra*)

Here, in *karma-yoga* (the discipline of works), there is no loss of the initial effort '*Abhikrama*' means initial effort. "Loss" means loss of capacity to accomplish the results (sought) Even if it is begun and remains uncompleted, being interrupted in the middle, it does not remain without fruits There does not arise any sin even if what is begun (by way of *karma-yoga*) is interrupted (in the middle)

64 What is taught may be taken to be the disposition of mind needed for practical accomplishment as distinguished from that necessary for intellectual comprehension Alternatively it may be that which gives rise to knowledge of the modes of practice Thus the *karma-yoga* taught here has its roots in association with a particular attitude of mind (T C)

Even a small part of this moral discipline known as *karma-yoga* affords protection against great terror, the terror namely of *samsāra*

The same meaning is fully explained later thus "Neither here nor there, O Arjuna (Pārtha) is there destruction for him" (VI 40) But the other Vedic and secular (works which are the) means (for attaining fruits), when interrupted (in the middle), not only fail to give results, but also lead to evil effects <sup>65</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) distinguishes the attitude of mind relating to work which has become the means for the accomplishment of salvation from the disposition of mind relating to (religious) works intended to gain desired objects

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाला ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ ४१ ॥

41 *That disposition of mind which is here characterised by determination is single, O Arjuna (Kurunandana)! The dispositions of those who are wanting in determination have many branches and are without end.*

Here, in every rite which is in conformity with the *sāstras*, the disposition of mind characterised by determination is single. The disposition of mind characterised by determination is the disposition of mind relating to the work which ought to be performed by one who is desirous of salvation. '*Vyavasāya*' means determined conviction and this disposition of mind arises out of determined conviction, arrived at earlier, about the true nature of the self.

But the disposition of mind relating to the performance of rituals intended to gain desired objects, is characterised by want of determination. For only so much knowledge as that the self exists distinct from the body is necessary to qualify for performing rituals leading to the attainment of particular objects of desire, but not any determined conviction about the true nature of the self. (This is so) because, even if there is no determined conviction about the real nature of the

65 Even the obligatory (*nitya*) and occasional (*naimitika*) rites, when discontinued in the middle, cause sin. A little irregularity or incompleteness in performance brought about by illness, weakness, etc., may alone be tolerated. With regard to *kāmya* rites, intended for the accomplishment of desires, the slightest irregularity will lead not merely to deprivation of fruits, but also to sin. Worldly activities also, when discontinued, bring about evil effects.

self, there can arise yearning for *Śvarga* and such other objectives, the adoption of the means for their attainment and the enjoyment of those fruits and because (on account of this) there is no contradiction (of the teachings of the *śāstras*).

This same disposition of mind characterised by determination is single on account of its being concerned with the accomplishment of a single fruit. For to one who is desirous of salvation all rituals are enjoined only for the attainment of the single fruit of salvation. Therefore, since the purpose aimed at by the *śāstras* (for such a person) is one only, the disposition of the mind in regard to all rituals cannot but be single.

The meaning is that this is to be understood in the same manner as in the following (instance). The group of six sacrifices, beginning with the *Āgneya* with all their elements and subordinate parts, (though enjoined to be performed in separate passages), serves a single purpose of the *śāstras*,<sup>66</sup> on account of their being the means for the accomplishment of a single fruit and in consequence the disposition of mind with reference to these is one and the same.

But the dispositions of those who are wanting in determination (i.e., the conviction that all works done without desire for fruit help in the attainment of salvation) and are engaged in the performance of rituals for the accomplishment of such fruits as *Śvarga*, sons, cattle, food etc., are without end, on account of (the number of) fruits being without end and even there they have many branches. In rituals like the *Darśa-purnamāsa* (or the new moon and full moon sacrifices collectively), even though they are each prescribed for the attainment of a single fruit, there arises to these the character of having many branches, on account of distinctions about secondary fruits, as evidenced in (intercessions for blessings such as.) "He desires long life" (?). Hence the dispositions of those who are wanting in determination, have many branches and are without end.

<sup>66</sup> The reference is to six sacrifices known as the *Āgneya*, the *Āgnīśomiya*, the two *Āvdras*, the *Āvdragna* and the *Upāmkū*. They are enjoined in six different commandments in the *Vedas*. It is laid down in *Taitt Sam* (II 2 5) that it is obligatory on the part of one desirous of *Śvarga* to perform them all. The six sacrifices become reduced to two groups when they are referred to merely as full-moon and new-moon sacrifices (*Ibid.* I 6 9 1-2). They become further reduced to one composite ritual from the point of view of a person, desirous of obtaining the fruit accruing from their performance. (*Cf. Kat Śr S.* IV. 3. 47).

This is what is said. Whatever fruits, primary and secondary, are laid down in the scriptures in relation to obligatory and occasional rites, they should all be given up and with salvation as the only fruit (in view), all rites should be performed as having (this) common purpose in the *śāstras*. Also, among rites intended for the fulfilment of objects of desire, those which are suited to one's caste and stage in life (or *āśrama*) should be performed to the extent of one's capacity, after giving up their several fruits and treating them as the means for the attainment of salvation and, in consequence, as of the same nature as obligatory and occasional rites.

Then He condemns those who perform religious rites intended for the attainment of special objects of desire

यामिमा पुष्पिता वाच प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चित ।

वेदवादरता पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिन ॥ ४२ ॥

कामात्मान. स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।

क्रियाविशेषबहुला भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३ ॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयाऽपहृतचेतसाम् ।

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥ ४४ ॥

42-44. The unwise who take delight in discussions bearing on (the rituals of) the Vedas, and say that there exists nothing else, whose minds are given to worldly desires and who aspire for Svarga—(It is) these, O Arjuna (Pārtha)! who speak a flowery language which is productive of the fruit of rebirth and works suitable thereto, which abounds in (prescription of) varied rites and which tends towards the acquisition of enjoyments and lordly power. In respect of these whose mind is deluded by this (flowery language) and who are very much attached to enjoyments and lordly power, an attitude marked by determination cannot arise in their mind.

The unwise, whose knowledge is trifling, speak, as tending towards the acquisition of enjoyments and lordly power, this language, which is flowery, that is, having its flowers as its only fruits and seeming attractive at first sight. They take delight in discussions bearing on (the rituals of) the Vedas—that is, they are attached to discussions about Svarga and such other fruits in the Vedas. They say that there exists

nothing else. that is, on account of exceeding attachment to these (fruits), they say that there exists no fruit superior to *Svarga* or any similar objective. Their minds are given to worldly desires, their minds are intensely attached to the attainment of worldly desires. They aspire for *Svarga*, that is, look upon *Svarga* as their supreme objective. They speak this flowery language, which, at the close of the fruition of *Svarga* and such other results, is productive of the fruits known as rebirth and duties suitable thereto,<sup>67</sup> which abounds in (prescriptions of) varied rites, that is, which, being devoid of the knowledge of the ultimate truth, is full of various kinds of rituals and which tends towards the acquisition of enjoyments and lordly power. Such is the connected purport.<sup>68</sup>

In respect of these who are very much attached to enjoyments and lordly power and whose knowledge is carried away by that (flowery) language bearing on enjoyments and lordly power, the aforesaid attitude marked by determination is not brought about, that is, is not produced in the *samādhi* or *mudra*. *Samādhi* is that in which knowledge of the self arises, namely, the mind (or the faculty of attention). The meaning is that, in the mind of these persons, there can never arise a disposition, holding (all) religious rites to be the means for salvation and based on determined conviction about the real nature of the self. Hence no attachment should be formed by one who is desirous of salvation to rituals intended for the attainment of objects of desire.

It may be asked why the *Vedas*, which, being more full of affection than thousands of fathers and mothers, are engaged in redeeming selves, should teach in this manner rites whose fruits are trifling and

67 The reading favoured by *T C*, '*punarjanmakarmākhya phalapradam*', has been rendered here. It is supported by the scriptural and *Smṛiti* teaching that the work and duties of reborn souls are determined by *karma*. Vide *Gaut-D S* (XI 31) and *Ap D S* (II 1, 2, 3). See also *S B* (III 1 8). An alternative reading, noticed by *T C*, '*janmakhyakarmaphalapradam*', agrees with Śrī Sankara's interpretation.

68 (i) The complicated sentence in the two stanzas has been reasonably construed. (ii) 'Flowery speech' has been well explained by Prof. M. Ranga-charya as "such language as at first sight seems to be beautiful and true, but is, on further examination, seen to be disappointing" (*L G I*, p. 121). *T C* distinguishes it from the discussions on the *Vedas* either as standing for secular accounts of the fruits of rituals or as indicating the mandates in the *Vedas*. (iii) Immediately below, it is declared that there should be no attachment to *Kāmya* rites. What is prohibited is their performance with attachment to fruits.

which are productive of re-births, and how what is taught in the *Vedas* can be declared as deserving of being abandoned. To these questions He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) then replies

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

निर्वृन्दो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ ४५ ॥

45 The *Vedas* have for their subject to the three *gunas* O Arjuna, be free from the three *gunas*, free from the pairs of opposites, steadily fixed always in (pure) *sattva*, indifferent alike to fresh acquisitions and the safeguarding of what has been acquired, and marked by self-control

The expression, '*traigunyam*' stands for the three *gunas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (taken collectively) Here by the word, '*traigunyam*', are indicated the persons in whom *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are preponderant<sup>69</sup> The *Vedas* are concerned with these (persons) On account of their exceeding affection, the *Vedas* teach what is good to those in whom *tamas* preponderates, to those in whom *rajas* preponderates and to those in whom *sattva* preponderates Had they (i.e., the *Vedas*) not taught those (in whom *tamas* or *rajas* preponderates) the attainment of *Svarga* and such other fruits suitably to the *gunas* (preponderant in them), then, those persons, being averse to salvation, the fruit of *sattva*, on account of the preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas* (in them), and not knowing the means for the accomplishment of the results desired by them, would be overcome by their attachment to worldly desires, and having become involved with what should not be resorted to under the delusion of such things being worthy of acceptance, they would get lost<sup>70</sup> Hence the *Vedas* have for their subject the three *gunas*.

But do you become free from the three *gunas* Now you have the *sattva* preponderant in you that alone do you develop The meaning is "Do not become subjected to the preponderance of the three *gunas* in their state of intermixture. do not foster such preponderance"<sup>71</sup>

69. Cf Śrī Śankara's view that '*traigunyam*' means '*samsara*'

70. But for the *Vedas* providing for the fulfilment of the desires of all kinds of people, false and heretical religions will flourish (T C)

71. What is stated amounts to this "Give up food and such other things that tend to cause the preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas*" (T C.)

(Be) free from the pairs of opposites—*rid*, that is, of all the characteristics pertaining to worldly life (*samsāra*) (be) steadily fixed always in *sattva* that is, become established in *sattva*, developed in a state of purity and freed from the mixture of the (other) two *gunas*. If it be asked how (this is to be done), be indifferent alike to fresh acquisitions and the safeguarding of what have been acquired. That is, give up the acquisition of objects which are external to the means for the realisation of the self in its true nature and the safeguarding of such objects already acquired. And then be marked by self-control that is, become an ardent seeker after the essential nature of the self. *Yoga* is the acquisition of what is not obtained, and *kṣema* the safeguarding of what has already been acquired.

In regard to you conducting yourself in this manner, the preponderating influence of *rajas* and *tamas* will be destroyed, and *sattva* will increase.

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वत सप्लुतोदके ।

तावान् सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानत ॥ ४६ ॥

46 As much use as there is (to a thirsty person) in a reservoir, which is filled with water everywhere, (so much only is the use) in all the Vedas to a learned aspirant after salvation.

All that is taught in the *Vedas* is not fit to be utilised by all persons. Just as, in regard to a reservoir of water which has been constructed for fulfilling all kinds of purposes and is filled with water everywhere, whatever use, that is, whatever advantage there is to a thirsty person, only to that extent will it be used by him and not all (of it)—in that manner, whatever in all the *Vedas* constitutes the means for salvation to a discerning *Brāhmaṇa*, that is, to one who is well versed in the *Vedas* and is desirous of salvation, that same alone is to be taken by him and nothing else.<sup>72</sup>

Next He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) points out that this much alone is required by a person who is desirous of salvation and is well established in *sattva*.

<sup>72</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara understands the term, '*Brāhmaṇa*' to mean an ascetic, while Śrī Madhva takes it to mean one who has direct vision of the *Brahman*. Both take the stanza to mean that the fruits of rituals are included in those of knowledge.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भु मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ ४७ ॥

47 *To work alone is your right and never to the fruits (thereof). Do not become (i e., do not regard yourself as) the cause of work and (its) fruit, nor have attachment to inaction*

In regard to obligatory, occasional and desire-winning rites which are (all) taught in the *Vedas* as associated with some specific fruit or other, to the (performance of such) rite alone there is the right for you who are established in *sāttva* and are desirous of salvation. But never is there any right to the fruits which are known to be associated with such (rite). Because that which is associated with fruits is of the form of bondage, and because that (rite) which is done merely for its own sake and is of the form of My worship becomes the means for salvation, do not become the cause of (both) work and (its) fruit. Even in respect of the rite performed by you, it is necessary to meditate on you, who are established in pure *sattva* and are desirous of salvation, not being the agent. Similarly, it is necessary to meditate upon your not being the cause even of the appeasing of hunger and such other results (of worldly works helpful for the performance of enjoined religious rites). Later on, it will be taught that both these (i e., the agency of action and the bringing about of fruits) ought to be considered as belonging either to the *gunas* or to Me who am the Lord of all. Do work, thinking thus <sup>73</sup>

To inaction, that is, to refraining from performing (obligatory duty), as when the declaration was made by you, "I will not fight," let there be no attachment in you. The purport is let there be attachment in you only to war and such other duties in the manner pointed out above.

Thus alone He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) makes clear

योगस्थ कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

सिद्धयसिद्धयो समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ ४८ ॥

48 *Fixed in yoga, giving up attachment, do every work, O Arjuna (Dhananjaya). Being the same in relation to success and failure (therein) (do such work). (such) evenness is said to be yoga.*

73 The reference is to the teaching later given in III 27, 28, 30



Giving up attachment to the kingdom, relatives etc., and fixed in *yoga*, engage in war and such other activities. Do these, becoming equal-minded in regard to the success and failure arising from the victory etc., which are in them. This equal-mindedness in regard to success and failure is what is indicated here by the word, '*yoga*', in (the phrase) "*fixed in yoga*". *Yoga* is the calm equanimity of mind which is of the form of evenness in success and failure <sup>74</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches for what purpose this is mentioned again and again

दूरेण ह्यवर कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणा फलहेतव ॥ ४९ ॥

49 For (other) work is far inferior to (the work carried out with the appropriate) mental disposition (described above), O Arjuna (*Dharmāñjaya*)! In the mind (i.e., mental disposition), seek refuge (while doing work). Those whose motives (for work) are the results, are pitiable.

All other work is far inferior to the work associated with whatever disposition of mind consists in giving up the principal fruit and maintaining evenness in regard to success and failure about the secondary fruits. Between these two kinds of work, great is the disparity which is of the form of (the) superiority (of one) and (the) inferiority (of the other). The work associated with the disposition of mind mentioned above removes all miseries arising from the state of *samsāra*, and leads (one) to salvation, <sup>75</sup> which has the character of being the highest object of human pursuit. Other (work) leads (one) to *samsāra* whose nature is endless misery.

Therefore, while work is being done, seek refuge in the aforesaid (disposition of) mind. 'Refuge' (*saranam*) means place of *anode* <sup>76</sup>. The meaning is remain in that (attitude of) mind alone.

<sup>74</sup> The meaning of '*yoga*' is here based on the use of the term in *Yoga S* (I 2) and similar usage. (T C)

<sup>75</sup> *Karma yoga* removes all the miseries of *samsara* without exception, while political policy, medicine, sacrifice, etc., alleviate only particular miseries to a limited extent. (T C)

<sup>76</sup> The word, '*sarana*', may mean, according to *4th S* (XXVI. 34), 'means', or 'home', or 'protector'.

“Those, whose motives (for work) are the results are pitiable”  
That is, those who do work with attachment to fruits etc., are pitiable,  
they are sure to be bound in *samsāra*

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योग. कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ ५० ॥

50 He who has (this) disposition of mind gives up here (while practising what has been taught) the results of both good and evil deeds Hence link yourself up with the (required) disposition (yoga) This disposition (yoga) means skill in (performing) works

He who, united with the appropriate mental disposition, performs works, gives up (in due course) the results of both good and bad deeds, which have accumulated from time without beginning, are endless and form the cause of bondage Therefore, link yourself up with the aforesaid disposition of mind

The (abovesaid) disposition (of mind) is skill in (performing) works (which produce bondage) (in such a way as to win salvation) While works are being done, this disposition of mind indicates skill, great ability The meaning is that it can be attained only through great ability

कर्मज बुद्धियुक्ता हि फल त्यक्त्वा मनीषिण ।

जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ता पद गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ ५१ ॥

51 The wise, who have the (appropriate) mental disposition, do, indeed, give up the fruits born of work Then they are freed of the bondage of birth and go to the place where there is no suffering

Those who have the (appropriate) mental disposition, perform work, giving up the fruits born of work On account of this, they are completely freed from the bondage of birth and go to the place where there is no suffering<sup>77</sup> The meaning of ‘indeed’ (hi) is that this (teaching) is well known in all the *Upanishads*

77 ‘*Anamayam padam*’ rendered as ‘the place where there is no suffering’ may mean, according to T. C. ‘a particular place (namely, the Highest Heaven), or the essential nature of the Supreme Soul which is the highest object of attainment, or the essential nature of the individual self understood as under the control of the *Brahman*’ Śrī Śaṅkara takes the phrase to mean Vishnu’s supreme abode which is known as *moksha* and is devoid of all calamities

यदा ते मोहकलिल बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।

तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ ५२ ॥

52 When your intelligence gets beyond the turbid mass of delusion, then you will feel disgust for what is to be heard as well as for what has been (already) heard

When the intelligence of yourself who are engaged in work in the aforesaid manner and are purified from sins through such conduct, gets beyond the turbid mass of delusion—the dense impurity of sin which is of the nature of delusion and which is the cause of attachment to very insignificant fruits—then, towards fruits and such other things which have been heard from Us as worthy of rejection as well as towards what is to be heard (of similar things), you of your own accord will surely feel disgust, that is, will feel (disgust) at once <sup>78</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) teaches the fruit known as self-realisation (*yoga*) and forming the goal of the performance of duty, which is taught in the passage beginning with “Listen to this (other attitude) in regard to *karma-yoga*” (II 39), which is based on knowledge about the real nature of the self and is refined by a particular attitude of mind

श्रुतविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।

समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३ ॥

53 When your intelligence, well convinced by hearing (from Me) and firmly fixed, stands unshaken in concentrated attention (*samādhi*), then you will attain the vision of the self (*yoga*)

‘*Śruti*’ (here) means ‘hearing’ (and not the *Vedas*) When your intelligence, which, by hearing (the truth) from us, has become

78 The original has the expression, ‘*gantāsi*’, which Śrī Rāmānuja glosses as ‘*gamisyasi*’, ‘*Gantāsi*’, it is pointed out by T. C., should not be split up into ‘*ganta*’ (goer) and ‘*asi*’ (you are). As it has to govern the noun, ‘*nirvedam*’, in the accusative case, the *tic* suffix could not have been used. The indication of future makes the *trā* suffix inappropriate. Hence the nominal form ‘*gantā*’ from the verb ‘*gam*’ could not have been constructed in the only two possible ways. Taken as a single word, *gantāsi* is second person singular of the periphrastic future, which is used to represent actions in the distant future. But here only the simple future is intended, and no time lag is suggested between crossing the delusion and feeling disgust. Hence Śrī Rāmānuja’s gloss makes ‘*gantāsi*’ equivalent to ‘*gamisyasi*’, second person singular of the simple future

greatly convinced, which has for its object the eternal, unsurpassed and subtle principle of the self belonging to a species different from all others, and which of itself is firmly fixed, that is, invariable in form—(when your intelligence which is of this kind) stands unshaken in attentive concentration, purified by the performance of work without attachment, then you will attain to *yoga*, which is the direct perception of the self

What is said amounts to this *Karma-yoga*, which is preceded by a knowledge of the real nature of the self, based on the *śāstras* leads to a firm devotion to knowledge known as the state of steady understanding and the state of steady understanding, which is in the form of devotion to knowledge, brings about the vision of the self known as *yoga* <sup>79</sup>

Having been taught thus, Arjuna (Pārtha) questions about the nature of the steady understanding which forms the means for the accomplishment of *yoga* and which is attainable by means of *karma-yoga* characterised by work without attachment, and also about the mode of conduct of the man of steady understanding

अर्जुन उवाच—

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।

स्थितधी किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत ब्रजेत किम् ॥ ५४ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

54 What, O Kṛṣṇa (Keśava), is the language about him who is of steady understanding and is established in control over his mind? What will he of steady understanding speak? How will he sit (i.e., meditate), and how will he move (and do things)?

What is the speech about the man of steady understanding who is established in control over his mind? What is the descriptive phrase? The meaning is of what kind is his nature? How does the man of steady understanding speak etc?<sup>80</sup>

79 First, the knowledge of truth gained from the *Sāstras* then meditation in the form of a succession of memories, then and through it direct vision. Such are the stages of *jñāna* (T C)

80 T C points out that all the three modes of action through speech, body and mind must be deemed to be comprised in the three questions asked about the speaking, sitting and moving of the man of steady understanding. Speaking is action through speech, going action through the body. 'Sitting' therefore should mean action through the mind, that is, meditation while sitting

The particular way of behaviour (of the man of steady understanding) is described, because through a description of (his) particular way of behaviour, his essential nature also gets described

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

THE LORD SAID

55 When one completely gives up all the desires which have affected his mind, O Arjuna (Pārtha), and becomes pleased in himself with himself then he is said to be of steady understanding

When one becomes pleased in himself with himself, that is, with his mind resting solely on the self within himself and in consequence of this pleasure gives up entirely all the other desires which have affected his mind then he is spoken of as a man of steady understanding. This is the climax of firm devotion to knowledge (i.e., *jñāna-yoga*)<sup>81</sup>

Then, the state next below that of one established in knowledge and not far separated from it, is spoken of

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनास्मुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।

वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थिरधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

56 He whose mind is not distressed amidst painful experiences, who is free of the desire to enjoy pleasures and who is devoid of longing, fear and anger—he is called a sage of steady understanding

Even when there are causes for grief like separation from beloved persons, his mind is not distressed—he is not afflicted by misery. He is free of the desire to enjoy pleasures—that is, even though the objects of his desire are near at hand, he has no desire (for them). He is devoid of longing, fear and anger. Longing is the desire for things not yet attained—he is devoid of this. Fear is the misery arising from

81 Śrī Rāmānuja takes verses 55-58 as describing in descending order four stages in the development of the sage of steady wisdom. T. C. connects these with the stages of the inferior *vairāgya* or non-attachment known to the practice of *yoga*, according to Patanjali. *Yoga S.* (I 15) defines the inferior non-attachment as that of a person who has turned away from things seen (i.e., objects of sense) and things revealed (such as *Śvarga* and other fruits of religious rites). It is called *vā īkura*, the conquering. This is the highest stage of the inferior *vairāgya*. (The earlier stages are taken to be implied in this aphorism.)

the perception of causes which will bring about separation from what is beloved or meeting with what is undesirable : he is free of this Anger is an agitated state of one's mind which is productive of misery, and which is directed against another sentient being who has been instrumental in bringing about separation from what is beloved or meeting with what is undesirable he (i.e., the sage of steady understanding) is free from this <sup>82</sup>

A sage of this description, who is given to constant meditation on the self, is said to be of steady understanding

Then the next stage below (this) is mentioned

यस्सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।

नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

57 He who has no affection (for what is pleasing) everywhere, and who, whatever he may come by, good or evil, feels neither delight nor aversion his understanding is well established

He who everywhere has no affection for what is pleasing, that is, who is indifferent (towards them), and who, coming by good and evil in the form of union with and separation from pleasing objects (respectively) is devoid of delight (at the former) and aversion (from the latter)—he also is of steady understanding <sup>83</sup>

He (Sri Krishna now) mentions the next lower state

यदा सहरते चाय कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८ ॥

58. When he withdraws the senses everywhere from the objects of the senses, even as a tortoise withdraws its (protruding) limbs, then his understanding is firmly established

<sup>82</sup> This state is known as *ekendriya*, concerned with (the disciplining of) a single organ of sense, namely, the internal sense or the faculty of attention. Other senses having been subdued, the internal impression left by previous experiences is still able to produce in the mind faint longing or regret. Thus, says T. C., desire and aversion still remain like fire hidden by ashes. Some writers on the practice of *yoga* view this state as concerned with the efforts to control desire for honour, aversion towards dishonour and such other 'mental passions'.

<sup>83</sup> What is described here corresponds to the *vyakreka* stage, where undestroyed desires are differentiated from destroyed desires. The former are discerned when one rejoices in their accidental fulfilment or gets vexed at any hindrances thereto. This leads to efforts towards their eradication.

He who withdraws well the senses everywhere from the objects of the senses, just when the senses attempt to contact the objects of the senses—in the way in which a tortoise (withdraws its protruding) limbs— and fixes his mind on the self, he too is of steady understanding <sup>84</sup>

Thus (these) four kinds of devotion to knowledge are to be understood as (so many stages), each succeeding stage giving rise to the stage mentioned previous to it <sup>85</sup> Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the difficulty of attaining firm devotion to knowledge and of the means of attaining it

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिन ।

रसवर्ज रसोऽप्यस्य पर दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥

59 *The objects of the senses, save only for the relish, turn away from an embodied being who has no food (for the senses) But even the relish goes away on perceiving what is supreme (beyond them)*

The sense-objects constitute the food of the senses. From an embodied being who has no food, that is, from one who has withdrawn his senses from sense-objects, (these) sense-objects, being turned away from him, go away, save for the relish (for them) 'Relish' (*rasa*) means longing. The meaning is that longing for sense-objects does not go away. But even this longing goes away, on perceiving the essential nature of the self, which is supreme beyond the objects of the senses, being productive of greater happiness.

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चित ।

इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभ मन ॥ ६० ॥

60 *Even in the case of the wise man who strives (to control them), the senses prove rebellious, and carry away the mind forcibly*

84 The initial stage, *yatamāna*, is one of effort at turning the senses inwards

85 The four stages set out above also answer the four questions asked by Arjuna about the sage of steady understanding. He is such that his sole delight is in self-realisation, he speaks only about the self, his sitting is intended only for meditation on the self, and if he moves about, that also is only to subserve self-realisation (T C)

Save through beholding the self, the longing for sense-objects does not go away. When the longing for sense-objects does not go away (and continues to remain), the senses even of the wise man who strives (to control them), prove rebellious, that is, (too) violent (to be controlled), and carry away the mind after overcoming it by force.

Thus, the conquest of the senses is dependent on the seeing of the self, and the seeing of the self is dependent on the conquest of the senses. Hence firm devotion to knowledge is difficult to obtain.

तानि सर्वाणि सयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्पर ।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१ ॥

61 After subduing them all, he should be in meditation, holding Me as supreme. His knowledge is well established, whose senses are in subjection.

With a view to avoiding all this (difficulty of reciprocal dependence between the conquest of the senses and the vision of the self), he has to subdue the senses, which are difficult to conquer on account of (their) attachment to sense-objects. Then, having fixed the mind in Me, who am holy and auspicious and the only object fit for meditation,<sup>86</sup> he should remain calm and collected. When the mind has Me for its subject, then such a mind, purified by the burning away of all impurities and free of all attachment to the objects of the senses, brings the senses under its own control. Then the mind, keeping the senses under its control, will be able to see the self. What has been taught in (the passage), "In the manner in which fire united with the wind burns with rising flames a forest of dry trees, the All-Pervading Lord (Vishnu), enshrined in the hearts of the *yogins*, (burns away) all sins" (V P VI 7 74), the same He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches here (by declaring) "His knowledge is well established whose senses are under subjection."<sup>87</sup>

86 The term, 'subhī raya', here applied to the Lord is taken to qualify His divine form as seen by Arjuna before him. The ideas connoted are such auspiciousness as destroys sins and fitness for being an object of meditation compare also the commentary under A 10.

87 The vicious circle of sense control leading to vision of the self and such vision being needed for sense-control is broken by the teaching that meditation on God destroys sins and promotes sense control.



He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) says "One who strives to conquer the senses, relying on the weight of his own exertions and without fixing his mind on Me in this manner, becomes lost "

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसस्सङ्गतेषूपजायते ।

सङ्गात्सजायते काम कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ ६२ ॥

क्रोधाद्भवति समोहः समोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३ ॥

62 To the man who keeps on meditating on sense-objects there arises abundantly attachment to them From attachment desire is born, and from desire springs anger all around

63 From anger comes great confusion (about right and wrong) and from (this) great confusion loss of memory From loss of memory (there arises) the destruction of (the right disposition of) the mind and from the destruction of (the right disposition of) the mind, he is lost

In the case of one, indeed, whose attachment to sense-objects is rooted out and whose mind is not fixed in Me, even though he remains in (some sort of) control over the senses, meditation on sense-objects is unavoidable by reason of the unconscious subtle impressions of sins (from times) without beginning Attachment again develops fully in "the man who keeps on meditating over sense-objects " "From attachment desire is born " What is known as desire (*kāma*) is, indeed, nothing other than a developed state of attachment (*sanga*) That state, after reaching which it is not possible for a man to remain without enjoying sense-objects, is known as desire "From desire springs anger all around " When a desire exists but its object is not near, a feeling against persons near-by to the effect, "By these our desire is hindered," is anger

"From anger comes great confusion " The great confusion is want of discrimination as regards what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Under its influence, one does everything Thence there arises loss of memory, when an attempt is begun to subjugate the senses and do similar things. "From loss of memory (there arises) the destruction of (the right disposition of) the mind " That is, there will be destruction of whatever effort has been made to win the

knowledge of the self From the destruction of (the right disposition of) the mind, he becomes immersed again in *samsāra* and is lost <sup>88</sup>

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।

आत्मवश्यंविधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

64 But he who experiences (with indifference) the sense-objects with the help of senses which are free from desire and aversion and are under his own control, has an obedient self, and attains tranquillity.

Having fixed, in the manner already described, the mind in Me, who am holy and auspicious and the only object fit for meditation, and am the Lord of all, he who experiences, that is, views with indifference, the sense-objects with the help of senses which are free from desire and aversion on account of all his impurities having been completely burnt out, and which are under his control—(such a person) has an obedient self, that is, a disciplined mind. He attains tranquillity. The meaning is that his mind (*antahkarana*) will be freed from impurities.

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।

प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५ ॥

65 On the rise of tranquillity, the loss comes to him of all miseries. For in these case of the person with the tranquil mind, the right disposition soon gets well established.

When the mind of this man becomes tranquil, the loss comes (to him) of all miseries arising from contact with *prakṛti* (or matter). For in the case of the man whose mind is tranquil, that is, is free from the blemishes which are opposed to the vision of the self, the right disposition of mind, which has the pure self for its subject, gets established even at that very moment. Therefore, when the mind is tranquil, the loss of all miseries certainly takes place <sup>89</sup>

88 (i) We have here, as Professor Rangacharya puts it, 'a consecutive and consistent psychological chain, in which every link is complete and in perfect position' (*L G I*, p. 156). (ii) '*Pranasyati*' (he perishes) in verse 63 has been rendered as 'he is lost'. As *T. C.* points out, this means, when applied to the immortal soul, failure to realise its essential nature on account of its being confounded with the body. Hence further sojourn in *samsāra* is meant.

89 The attainment of tranquillity by the mind leads to the vision of the self. In this way the final result is the loss of all miseries.

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना  
न चाभावयत शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुत सुखम् ॥ ६६ ॥

66 *There is no right disposition to him who is not united (with Me in meditation), nor is there any conception (of the self) in the case of him who is not united (with the right disposition) And to him who does not reflect (on the self), there is no tranquillity Whence will there be happiness for him who is not tranquil?*

In the case of him whose mind is not dedicated to Me and who is engaged in controlling the senses through his own exertion, the right disposition about the pure self is never established And it is in consequence of this that there does not arise in him (who lacks the right disposition) the conception of this (self) And to him who does not reflect on the pure self, there is the desire for sense-objects (and) tranquillity does not come Whence will come the attainment of eternal and unsurpassed happiness to him who is not tranquil and is addicted to the desire for sense-objects?

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) again refers to the tragic fate of one who does not practise the restraint of the senses in the manner described above

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरता यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।  
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञा वायुर्नविमिवाम्भसि ॥ ६७ ॥

67 *For that mind, which is made to follow the experiencing senses carries away his understanding as the wind (carries away) a ship in water*

That mind, which is made by a man to obey, that is, to go after the senses which keep on experiencing, that is, tend to remain in contact with sense-objects—such a mind carries away the understanding devoted to the pure self The meaning is that it makes it (the understanding) devoted to sense-objects (The understanding is carried away) in the manner in which a contrary wind forcibly carries away a ship which is being driven in water

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६८ ॥

68 *Therefore, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), his understanding is well established whose senses are in every way withheld from sense-objects*

Therefore, he whose mind is fixed in the manner above described on Me, who am holy and auspicious and the only object fit for meditation—(he) whose sense are in every way withheld from sense-objects—in his mind alone the (right) understanding becomes well established

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) describes the state of excellence attained by one whose senses are thus kept under control and whose mind is tranquil <sup>90</sup>

या निशा सर्वभूताना तस्या जागर्ति सयमी ।

यस्या जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुने ॥ ६९ ॥

69 *One who is self-controlled is awake during what is night to all (other) beings. To the sage who sees (the self), that is night during which all (other) beings keep awake*

Whatever understanding, having the self for its subject, is night to all beings, that is, is obscure like night—in respect of that understanding having the self for its subject, he is awake who controls the senses and has a tranquil mind. The meaning is that he keeps seeing the self <sup>91</sup>. In respect of whatever understanding having sound and other sense-objects for its subject, all beings are awake, that is, are actively cognisant—that understanding having sound and other objects of sense for its subject is dark like night to the sage who sees the self

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठ समुद्रमाप प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।

तद्वत्कामा य प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥७०॥

70. *He attains to peace into whom all desires enter, as the waters enter into the ocean, which is (ever) being filled and (yet) remains unaltered and within its bounds but not he who craves after objects of desire*

90 In verses 69–71, the results of the four stages of *jñāna yoga*, outlined in verses 55–58, are described. *T C* suggests that the first two verses here are concerned with the effects of the *ravikara* and the *ekendriya* stages, while the third verse refers to the *yatama* in 'vihaya kāmīn' (giving up desires) and to the *vyatireka* stage in 'niraspṛha' (he who is without attachment or desire). Alternatively the four stages may be regarded as having been dealt with in the first two verses, the third being a summing up.

91 The ultimate stage of *jñāna yoga* where the overwhelming interest in the nature of the self prevents the mind from taking note of anything else, appears to be indicated here. *T C* points out that 'samyama' is not used here in the technical sense of comprising together *dharana* (steadying of the mind), *dhyāna* (contemplation) and *samādhi* (profound meditation) of Patañjali's *yoga* of eight stages. It merely refers to achieved self control leading to success in *jñāna yoga*.

The waters of rivers enter into the ocean which is becoming full by itself and is of the same (unchanging) form. The ocean shows no difference whether the waters enter or not. Even so that self-controlled sage whom all objects of desire, that is, objects of sense like sound, enter—within the range of whose senses they pass—he attains to peace. The meaning is that he alone attains to peace, who, solely on account of the contentment arising from seeing his own self, feels no agitation both when objects of sense like sound come within the range of his senses and when they do not. But not he who craves after objects of desire, whoever is agitated by sound and other sense-objects, he never, indeed, (even in the absence of such sense-objects) attains to peace.<sup>92</sup>

विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमाश्चरति निस्पृहः ।

निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ ७१ ॥

71 The man, who, having given up all objects of desire, lives without attachment, the sense of possession and the sense of egotistic self-importance—he attains to peace

Objects of desire (*kāmāḥ*) are what are desired, that is, sound and other sense-objects. The man, who, having given up all sense-objects such as sound etc., and being without attachment therefor, without the sense of mineness therein and without the love, as for the self, in regard to the body which is not the self, leads his life—he, after seeing the self, attains to peace.<sup>93</sup>

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैना प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।

स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥ ७२ ॥

72 This is the (*brāhmi*) state, O Arjuna (*Pārtha*), leading to the attaining of the self. After attaining this, one does not fall into delusion. By remaining in this state even at the closing time of life, one gains the blissful self.

92 This state, slightly below that described in the previous stanza, is one where the mind takes note of the objects of the senses without being disturbed by them.

93 The reference here is to one who has not yet secured the vision of the self, but is striving for it.

This state of performing work unattached, which is based on the knowledge of the eternal self and which aims at the (state of) steady understanding, is the *brāhmī* state which brings about the attainment of the *brahman* (i.e., the self). After attaining such a state of performing work, one does not fall into delusion, that is, does not again enter the cycle of births and deaths. Reaching this state even during the last years of life, one gains the blissful *brahman*, that is, attains the *brahman* who is full of bliss. The meaning is that he attains the self who is the seat solely of bliss.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, in the second chapter (of the *Gītā*), are taught that attitude of mind in regard to (the attainment of) the *sāṅkhya* (or the soul), having the eternal self for its subject, and based on it, the disposition of mind which forms the means for achieving the *yoga* of steady understanding and which has for its subject *karma-yoga* consisting of doing work without attachment—(taught) in order to remove the delusion of one (i.e., Arjuna) who did not know the real nature of the self and the fact that the work known as war is a means for the attainment of that (self), who was deluded by regarding the body to be the self, and who, on account of this delusion, retired from fighting.

This has been taught (in the following verse by Śrī Yāmuna-charya) "The dispositions of mind in regard to the *sāṅkhya* (or the self) and *yoga* (or practical work), which comprehend within their scope (respectively) (knowledge of) the eternal self and the performance of work without attachment, and which have for their objective (the state of) steady understanding, were taught in the second (chapter) for the purpose of removing his (i.e., Arjuna's) delusion" (G S 6)<sup>95</sup>

<sup>94</sup> The word, '*brahman*', is used in the *Gita* in the three senses of the Supreme Self, the individual self and the world of matter. Here '*brāhmī*' is taken to relate to the individual self. What is specifically taught is the achievement of self-realisation through *jñāna yoga*, which self-realisation will lead in due course to God-realisation.

<sup>95</sup> Śrī Yāmuna's analysis of the second chapter is that Arjuna's delusion is here sought to be removed by teaching the way to self-realisation through *jñāna-yoga*. The practice of *jñāna-yoga* requires the earlier practice of *karma-yoga* based on an appreciation of the teachings of the scriptures on the nature of the self. Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation of the chapter follows closely this scheme.

## CHAPTER III

What has been taught is to be understood in this manner. In order to speak about *bhakti* (or meditation with love) which is unswerving and unceasing, which is expressible by knowledge (*vedana*), worship (*upāsana*), meditation (*dhyāna*) and such other terms, and which forms the means for the attainment of the Highest Person (*Puruṣottama*), who is the Supreme *Brahman*, and is described in the *Vedānta*, on account of (His) being the goal of all persons seeking *mokṣa*, as being free from the least trace of all blemishes like ignorance and endowed with a multitude of innumerable auspicious qualities, unbounded and unsurpassed, — (in order to teach such *bhakti*) the realisation of the real nature of the seeking self has been taught (in the second chapter), which (realisation) forms a part of it (*i.e.*, *bhakti*) as stated in the teaching of Prajāpati, beginning with ‘He who is the self is devoid of sin etc.’” (*Chānd. Up.* VIII 7 1) and other texts, and which is accomplishable by *jñāni-gōṣa* brought about by (the performance of) work without attachment to (its), fruits, after (acquiring) a knowledge of its (*i.e.* the self’s) being eternal.<sup>96</sup>

In the teaching of Prajāpati, indeed, the realisation of the essential nature of the seeking self. On account of its being subordinate to the knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman*, expressed in the teaching with reference to the *Dhara* (or the *Brahman* as the ether of space within the heart) has been spoken about thus: ‘He who, after learning about the self, meditates on him’ (*Ibid.*). Then the nature of the individual self as transcending the states of wakefulness and deep sleep and as being incorporeal, is taught then it is concluded with a mention of the fruits of the *Dhara-vidyā* thus: “In this very manner, this same individual self (or *samprasāda*), rising up from this body, attains the Supreme Light and becomes manifest in this true nature” (*Chānd. Up.* VIII 12 2).<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> The reference here is to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VIII 7-12), where Prajāpati teaches in several stages the persistently questioning Indra the essential nature of the individual self. Śrī Rāmānuja sums up this teaching and points out that it is subordinate to the *Dhara-vidyā* (or meditation as a means of salvation on the *Brahman* as the ether of space within the cavity of the heart) taught a little earlier in the *Upaniṣad*. See the *Dharaudhikāra* of the *Śrībhāṣya* (I 3, 13-22) for a fuller discussion. *Sūtras* 18 and 19 deal particularly with the teaching of Prajāpati.

<sup>97</sup> The term, ‘*samprasāda*’, literally means that which is pure and serene, but is used in the *Upaniṣad* to signify the individual self. See Note 501 in *S. B.*, Vol II.

Elsewhere, too, in passages beginning with, "The wiseman gives up joy and sorrow after knowing God through that knowledge (of the self) which is derived from *yogic* self-concentration" (*Kath Up.* II. 12), the knowledge of the individual soul is laid down as essential by (the words), 'through knowledge derived from *yogic* self-concentration', on account of (its) being accessory to the knowledge of the Supreme *Brahman* enjoined in (the words), 'after knowing God'. The essential nature of the individual soul is then investigated in such other passages as "Neither the individual soul is born, nor does he die" (*Ibid* II 18)

Then, beginning with (the statement), "He is subtler than the most subtle" (*Ibid* II. 20), by means of such passages as "The wise man, after knowing Him to be the Self who is great and omnipresent, does not grieve" (*Ibid* II. 22) and "This Self cannot be gained by reflection on Vedic teaching (*pravachana*), nor by steady meditation (*medhā*), nor by largely hearing (the scriptures). Whomsoever this (Self) chooses, by him alone is He reached. To him this Self reveals His own form" (*Ibid* II 23), the nature of the Supreme Self, His worship and the nature of that worship as of the form of loving devotion are all expounded<sup>98</sup>. (The whole teaching) is concluded with (mention of) the fruits of the science of the Supreme *Brahman* by (the passage)- - "But that man who has discriminative knowledge for his charioteer, and the mind (or the internal organ of attention) for his reins- he reaches the other end of the road (on which he is journeying), and that is the supreme abode of Vishnu" (*Ibid* III 9)<sup>99</sup>

Hereafter, in the next four chapters (of the *Gītā*), this realisation of the individual self by the seeker (after God), along with the means of accomplishing the same, is fully explained

98 This passage has been interpreted in the *Śrībhāṣya* and other works as enjoining *bhakti*, because of its dismissal of mere *śravaṇa*, *manana* (*pravachana*) and *nidhidhyāsana* (*medhā*) as of no use. (T C)

99 The passage in the *Kath Up* starts with a mention of the knowledge of God and ends with a statement of the fruits of such knowledge. The mention therein of the realisation of the self without any separate results of its own makes it an essential pre-requisite of God-realisation. This same teaching is elaborated in this context in the *Gītā*, where the words of the *Kath Up* are reproduced with some additions and omissions. Here, too, then the knowledge of the self is taught similarly. (T C)



अर्जुन उवाच—

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।

तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मा नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*1 If it is your opinion, O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), that mental disposition is superior to action, why do You urge me to (this) fearful (indulgence in) action, O Kṛṣṇa (Kēśava)?*

“ If it is your opinion<sup>100</sup> that mental disposition, indeed, is superior to action, what for, then, do You urge me to fearful (indulgence in) action? ” What is said here amounts to this “ Steadfast practice of meditation (or *jñāna*) is alone the means for seeing the self, but the practice of *karma* is preparatory to it. And it was taught that this practice of meditation which constitutes the means for seeing the self could be brought about by the cessation of activities in regard to sound and other objects of the senses by all the senses and the mind <sup>101</sup> If therefore what is desired to be achieved is the seeing of the self which is brought about by the cessation of the activities of the senses, I should be directed to engage myself solely in the practice of meditation (or *jñānaniśṭhā*) which is preceded by the giving up of all *karma*<sup>102</sup> For what purpose then do You urge me to fearful (indulgence in) action, which consists of the activities of all the senses and is a hindrance to the seeing of the self? ”

व्यामिश्रेणैव वाक्येन बुद्धि मोहयसीव मे ।

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ २ ॥

*2 It seems as if, by deliberately confused language, You bewildered my intellect. Tell me the one (course of action) by which I may make certain (what is to be done) and attain bliss*

100 Arjuna seems to be referring to II 40

101 The reference is to the teaching about the *sthitaprajā* in Chapter II. (T C)

102 All *karma* would include even dispassionate action (T C)

“Therefore it appears (to me) as if You bewildered me by means of confused language”<sup>103</sup> For in regard to steadfast practice of meditation which constitutes the means for seeing the self and is of the nature of cessation from the activities of all the senses, the sentence ‘Work which is of a contrary nature to it (is) the means (thereto) do that alone’, is contrary and confused<sup>104</sup> Therefore tell me a sentence enjoining one thing only which is unconfused by nature and by which sentence I may become certain of the course to follow and attain bliss.

### श्रीभगवानुवाच—

लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मया जघ ।

ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्येयानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

THE LORD SAID

*‘In this world two forms of discipline have been mentioned by Me (to exist for men)—by jñāna-yoga for the Sāṅkhyas and by karma-yoga for the Yogins, O sinless one!’*

What has been previously said (by Me) is not rightly understood by you. In this world which is full of persons with varying qualifications, two forms of discipline relating to knowledge (or meditation) and action have indeed, been taught by Me earlier in accordance with the qualifications (of these persons) and without at all giving rise to any confusion. It is not that all men in the world in whom the desire for salvation has sprung up, become competent at once to practise *jñāna-yoga*. But one who, by means of work without desire for fruits and performed under the form of worshipping the Highest Person (*Paramapurusha*), becomes completely rid of his internal impurities and keeps his senses unagitated (he alone) becomes qualified for the discipline of knowledge.

103 Śrī Rāmānuja wishes to make it clear that Arjuna is not so much charging Śrī Kṛṣṇa with confusing him, as blaming his own folly for getting confused.

104 The confusion and contrariety may be made clear by two questions which Arjuna may be supposed to have in his mind: (i) How can work which is the opposite of meditation be helpful to it? (ii) How can it be obligatory on the part of one desirous of meditation to do something opposed to it? Śrī Sāṅkara traces Arjuna's perplexity to his inability to choose between *jñāna* and *karma*. In this view, Arjuna asks Śrī Kṛṣṇa to tell him which he has to follow.

That all works are of the form of worshipping the Supreme Person will be taught (later in the *Gītā*) as “ He from whom arise the activities, of all beings and by whom all this is pervaded--by worshipping Him by his own duty, man attains to perfection ” (XVIII 46) Here also the performance of work without attachment to the fruits (thereof) is enjoined by the verses beginning with “ To work alone is your right ” (II 47) And then, for one whose intellect is redeemed by this from the delusion which is of the form of the active agitation of the senses, *jñāna-yoga* is spoken of (as suitable) by the teaching “ When one completely gives up all the desires ” (II 55) etc

Therefore, to the Sāṅkhyas alone is taught the steadfast discipline by means of *jñāna-yoga*, but to the Yogins (that) by means of *karma-yoga* ‘ *Sāṅkhya* ’ means (a disposition of) the mind and those who are associated with it are the ‘ *Sāṅkhyas* ’ Those who are united with an intellect having only the self for its subject (of thought) are the Sāṅkhyas The Yogins are those who are not fit for this, but are qualified only for *karma-yoga* And therefore nothing whatever contradictory and confused, is taught when it is said that for those who are possessed of intellects which are agitated by the objects of the senses there is right to *karma-yoga* while to those who are not (so) agitated there is a right to *jñāna-yoga*

It is taught (in the ensuing stanza) that (even) when the desire for salvation arises in any worldly-minded person, *jñāna-yoga* is not easy to practise immediately

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्निष्कर्म्य पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च सन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

‡ A man does not attain to (his experience) a state transcending *karma-yoga* by not undertaking (the performance of) works nor does he attain success merely by (the) giving up (of works already begun)

Not by merely not undertaking (the performance of) the works prescribed in the *sāstras*, does a man attain the state transcending *karma-yoga*, that is, the discipline of knowledge nor by the giving up of works<sup>105</sup> prescribed by the *sāstras* and (already) begun by him

105 The purport of the teaching here is that success in *jñāna yoga* can come only by practising it properly It cannot be attained either by not undertaking *karma-yoga* at all or by giving it up after it is begun Note that ‘ *naish karma* ’ is not taken to mean a state of inaction

For success is assured (only) to work (performed) without attachment to fruits and in the form of worshipping the Supreme Person (*Parama-purusha*). Hence without it (i.e., such performance which is in the position of the cause) one does not attain that (success which is the effect). By those who have not worshipped God (Govinda)<sup>106</sup> by works (performed) without attachment to fruits and whose endless accumulations of sins proceeding from time without beginning have not been destroyed—(by such persons) the discipline of (meditation on) the self, which has to be preceded by the attainment of a state in which the senses are free from agitation, is difficult to acquire<sup>107</sup>

This alone He (the Lord) establishes (in the next stanza)

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

कार्यते ह्यवश कर्म सर्वं प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५ ॥

5 For none whatever remains at any time without doing work even for a moment. Everyone, even against his will, is made to do work by the *gunas* born of *prakṛti*.

For no person whatever living in this world ever remains without doing work. Every person, even though he may have resolved, 'I will not do anything', 'is made to do work', that is, is impelled to do work suited to him<sup>108</sup> by the *gunas* born of *prakṛti*—by *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which have developed conformably to his ancient *karma*. Therefore, *jñāna-yoga* is to be acquired by means of a purified internal organ (*antahkarana*), after having destroyed the ancient accumulation of sins by the *karma-yoga* of the aforesaid description and having brought *sattva* and other *gunas* under control.

106 *T C* notices here an echo from the line, '*Anārādhita-govindā ye narā dukkhabhāginaḥ*,' which may be translated as 'Those men who have not worshipped Govinda and who are destined to misery'. This quotation does not appear to have been traced.

107 The purport of the teaching here is that the performance of work without attachment to fruits is the first step in a series whose end-result is the practice of *jñāna-yoga*. The other intervening steps in order are the Lord getting pleased, the destruction of sins, the purification of the mind, the cessation of desire and hatred, the senses being at peace and their turning inward (*T C*).

108 The suitability or fitness is with regard to the *gunas* of *prakṛti* dominating an individual and the work he is impelled to do. That the persons in the world are of varied qualifications has been made clear under III 3.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) declares that one who undertakes *jñāna-yoga* in any other way (i e , without doing *karma-yoga*) is a hypocrite .

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि सयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।

इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

6 He who, having restrained the organs of action, remains thinking in his mind over the objects of the senses, is befooled in mind and is spoken of as a hypocrite (lit one of false conduct)

He whose internal and external organs of sense are unconquered, on account of his sins not having been destroyed, who has undertaken to gain knowledge of the self, whose mind is turned away from the self on account of (its) being addicted to the objects of the senses, and who remains thinking only about the objects of the senses—(he) is spoken of as a hypocrite because he acts differently, having willed differently The meaning is that, (while) busily engaged in gaining knowledge of the self, he becomes perverted and lost <sup>109</sup>

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।

कर्मेन्द्रियैर्कर्मयोगमसक्तस्स विशिष्यते ॥ ७ ॥

7 But he, who, having subdued his senses by the mind, Arjuna, begins to practise *karma-yoga* through the organs of action and who is free from attachment (to the fruits of his work), is higher in worth

Therefore, he who, with the help of a mind striving to see the self, directs his senses to work which is laid down in the *śāstras* and is of the same kind in its scope as what has been practised earlier, and who then begins to practise *karma-yoga* after giving up attachment and with the help of these senses which are prone to action—he, on account of there being no likelihood of his meeting with mishaps, excels the man following the discipline of *jñāna*

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।

शरीरयात्रासपि च ते न प्रसिद्धचेदकर्मणः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Do you perform work as something necessary and unavoidable Work, indeed, is superior to what is other than work (i e , meditation or

<sup>109</sup> Note that ' *vimūḍhātma* ' has been rendered as ' befooled in mind ' and is explained as ' whose mind is turned away from the self ' He gets lost as explained in II 62-3

*jñāna-yoga*) Even the subsistence of the body would become unsuccessful with you remaining without doing work

‘Necessary and unavoidable’ (*nyatam*) means ‘invariably concomitant’ (*vyūptam*) For work is invariably concomitant with that which has contact with *prakṛti* (i.e., with the self)

The possession of this contact with *prakṛti* is the result of unconscious subtle impressions (*vāsanā*) existing from time immemorial. Do work, because of work being easy to do and being unlikely to cause mishaps on account of its being necessary and unavoidable <sup>110</sup>

Work is superior to what is other than work, that is, even to the discipline of *jñāna*. Because of (the teaching), “A man (does not) experience a state transcending *karma-yoga*” (III 4), as the beginning (of this context), the discipline of *jñāna* alone is spoken of by the expression, ‘what is other than work’ (*a-karma*). Even in the case of one qualified for the discipline of *jñāna* the discipline of *karma*, indeed is better, because the discipline of *jñāna* is difficult to perform and liable to mishap on account of its not having been previously practised and its not being necessary and unavoidable. Meditation on the self not being an agent, (to be carried out) while work is being performed and with the help of the (previously acquired) knowledge of the true nature of the self, will be mentioned immediately. Therefore, the meaning is that for the reason that knowledge of the self is included in *karma-yoga*, that (*karma-yoga*) indeed is superior.

The declaration about the superiority of work to the discipline of *jñāna* holds good even when there is qualification for the discipline of *jñāna*. If you, giving up all work, qualify yourself for the discipline of *jñāna*, alone, then, for you, who are without action and following the discipline of *jñāna*, even the sustenance of the body as is conducive to the discipline of *jñāna* will not be successfully accomplished. The support of the body has necessarily to be carried out until the means (for the realisation of the self and then of the *Brahman*) are fully gone through. ‘Great sacrifices’<sup>111</sup> and such other things should be performed with the help of lawfully acquired wealth and the sustenance of the body should be carried out solely by eating their remains. This

<sup>110</sup> That is, invariably concomitant with the embodied self in the sense explained above

<sup>111</sup> These are the *pañcha mahā-yajñas*, enjoined as a daily ritual. *Vide* Glossary

may be made out from scriptural texts like "When the food is pure, the mind (or *satton*, the internal organ) is pure when the mind is pure, then remembrance (i.e., loving meditation) is firm" (*Chh Up* VII. 26 2) (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will (hereafter) teach "But the wicked who cook only for their own sakes eat sin" (III 13)

Hence even the sustenance of the body will not be achieved in the case of one who follows, indeed, the discipline of *jñāna*, and does not do work (Thus) *karma-yoga* is superior to *jñāna-yoga* even in the case of one who is fit for the discipline of *jñāna*, because obligatory and occasional rites<sup>112</sup> like the 'great sacrifices' have to be necessarily carried out even by one who follows the discipline of *jñāna* and who has to keep on (lit keeps on) sustaining his body until the means (for the realisation of the self) are fully gone through, because investigation of the true nature of the self is included in *karma-yoga* on account of (there being in it) meditation on the self not being the agent, and because also for one having contact with the *prakṛti* (i.e., an embodied soul in the circuit of *samsāra*) *karma-yoga* is easy to do and free from liability to mishap.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, do you<sup>114</sup> perform *karma-yoga* only. This is the purport

If it is argued that (any) action like the earning of wealth involves 'I-ness', 'mine-ness' and such other feelings agitative of all the senses, and that to this person (even if he is an aspirant for salvation) there will arise the bondage brought on by the subtle impressions of *karma*, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here says

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽय कर्मबन्धन ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गस्समाचर ॥ ९ ॥

112 The obligatory and occasional rites are the *nitya karmas* and the *saṃskṛitika karmas*. Vide Glossary

113 This verse is interpreted as asking Arjuna to practise *karma yoga* for three reasons (i) *Karma* (prescribed duty and ritual) is invariably concomitant with the physical embodiment and hence easier to practise than meditation on the self (ii) The discipline of works, by reason of its including within itself the bearing in mind of the idea that the self is not the agent, while work is being carried out, is superior to the discipline of meditation on the nature of the self (iii) Life cannot be lived without work and ritual

114 'You' here may mean one fit for *jñāna yoga* or one not fit therefor. In the former case, the advice is to do *karma-yoga* as it is superior to *jñāna-yoga*. In the latter case, resort to *karma-yoga* becomes inevitable (T C)

9 *This world (of embodied souls in the circuit of saṃsāra) is subject to the bondage of karma (in every work) except in the case of work done for the purpose of sacrifice. O Arjuna (son of Kuntī), perform work for this purpose, free from attachment*

This world becomes subject to the bondage of *karma* (through subtle impressions), when work—other than the acquisition of wealth etc. for the sake of sacrifices and other works prescribed in the *śāstras*—is performed, serving selfish purposes. Therefore, for the purpose of sacrifice, do you perform works like the acquisition of wealth. There, whatever attachment exists because of its being the means for accomplishing selfish purposes, become free from that attachment and carry out that (work) <sup>115</sup> When work is thus done for the purpose of sacrifices and other works (prescribed by the *śāstras*), by one free from attachment, the Supreme Person (*Paramapuruṣa*), pleased by sacrifices and such other works, bestows on him the undisturbed vision of the self, after eradicating the subtle impressions of *karma* of that person which have continued from time immemorial

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the necessity for sustaining the body solely by means of the remains of sacrifices in the case of those who are devoted to all (the approved) ends of human life, and the fault of those who sustain the body by things other than the remains of sacrifices

सह यज्ञैः प्रजा. सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापति. ।

अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेव वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ १० ॥

10 *In the beginning the Lord of all created beings, having created the creatures along with the sacrifices, said. "By this (sacrifice), may you prosper be this your cow of plenty for (your) desires"* <sup>116</sup>

115 *T C* here raises the question whether any work can be done without hoping for results. The answer given is that work can be its own end when it is regarded as worship of the Lord, even as attending to a friend's comforts is an end by itself. Compare V 29, where the Lord describes Himself as the friend of all creatures

116. Śrī Rāmānuja reads 'saha yajñash'. But Śrī Śankara has 'sahayajñash', and this is said to be the reading of Yādvaparakāśa also. *T C* points out that the latter reading is not generally favoured



As there is the scriptural text beginning with "The Lord of the whole creation" <sup>117</sup> (*M Nār* XI. 3), the word, 'Prajāpati', freed from all limitations, (i.e., in its widest connotation) denotes Nārāyaṇa who is the lord of all beings, the creator of all, the soul of all and the supreme, abode. In the beginning, at the time of creation, He, the Lord, the Lord of all created beings, beheld all beings, helpless on account of contact proceeding from time immemorial with non-intelligent matter excluded from the distinctions of name and form, dissolved within Himself, unfit to realise the objects of human pursuit and almost inanimate. He, the supremely merciful, through a desire to redeem them, placed them in the state of creation (lit. created them) along with the sacrifices, <sup>118</sup> with a view to the performance (by them) of the sacrifices in the form of His worship. (And He) said thus 'By this sacrifice, may you multiply that is, effect your increase and prosperity. Let this sacrifice yield you the desire called *mokṣa* which is the highest end of life as also other desires which are in conformity with it' <sup>119</sup>

How is this? <sup>120</sup>

देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।

परस्पर भावयन्त श्रेय परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

117 'Pāṇinī visvasya' is here equated to 'Prajāpati'. In *M Nār* (I 1) and *Chāṇḍ Up* (VIII 14 1), 'Prajāpati', is regarded as meaning the Supreme Self. All the four epithets that follow are taken from *Upanishadic* texts. 'Sarveśvara' occurs in *Bṛh Up* (IV. 4. 22) and *Māṇḍ Up* (6). 'Visvasya eṣātmāṇ' may be found in *Svet Up* (IV 14) *M Nār* (XI 3) has 'visvātmānāṁ parāyaṇaṁ

118 *T C* cites texts from the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (*R V* X 90) to show that the creatures are created along with the sacrifices. This may be taken to indicate the idea that religion is as old as man.

119 In the metaphor, the sacrifice is the cow of plenty, the desires fulfilled thereby are her milk. From God, the giver of all fruits, those required are taken by the sacrifice and conveyed to the sacrificer. In other words, the Lord, when worshipped through sacrifices, gives the desired fruits to the sacrificers. (*T C*)

120 This question is really four-in-one. (i) How can there be 'increase' for the (immutable) self? (ii) How can a sacrifice, done at a particular time bring about a result at a later date? (iii) How can sacrifices, described in the scriptures as the means for the attainment of *Svarga*, etc., become the means for *mokṣa*, which can be attained only by true knowledge? (iv) How can ritual which makes for bondage, lead to *mokṣa*? Or how can the satisfaction of various worldly desires be in harmony with the quest for *mokṣa*? (*T C*)

11 *By this, propitiate the gods, and may those gods nourish you (in return) Thus, supporting each other, may you obtain the highest good.*

'By this', by that (sacrifice) which constitutes worship of the gods, propitiate the gods who constitute My body and have Me as their Self. For He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will say (later) "For I am the enjoyer as also the lord of sacrifices" (BG IX 24). May these gods, propitiated by sacrifices and having Me as their Self, nourish you (in return) with food, drink and such other things which are needed for carrying out their worship. Thus, supporting each other, may you obtain the highest good called *mokṣa*.

इष्टान् भोगान् हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविता ।  
तैर्दानप्रदायैर्म्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव स ॥ १२ ॥

12 *For the gods, propitiated by means of the sacrifice, will give you the enjoyments desired (by you). He who enjoys what are given by them without offering unto them in return is undoubtedly a thief.*

"Propitiated by means of the sacrifice", that is, worshipped through the sacrifice, the gods, who have Me for their Self, "will give you the enjoyments desired (by you)". Whatever enjoyments are desired by men intent on achieving *mokṣa*, which is distinguished as the highest object of human pursuit, all those enjoyments, the gods, previously propitiated by one sacrifice after another, bestow on them. That is, whatever is needed for more and more worship, all those enjoyments they bestow on you. Whoever enjoys the enjoyments given (to him) by them (i.e., the gods) for the purpose of propitiating them without offering unto them in return, he is undoubtedly a thief. 'Theft' means, indeed, the entertainment of the idea of one's own property in regard to a thing which is another's and is intended solely for the use of that other, and the appropriation of the same for one's own self<sup>121</sup>. The purport is that there arises to such a person not

121. Compare the famous verse in *M B* (V 42 35) "He who understands differently (i.e., as independent) the soul which exists in a different way (i.e., as utterly dependent on God)—what sin remains uncommitted by that thief who steals away the soul?" It is also pointed out that the verb 'dāsynte', being in the *ātmnipada* form or that form which implies an action belonging or reverting to oneself, must here refer only to such giving as is intended for the giver's benefit.

merely unfitness for the supreme object of human pursuit, but also the attainment of hell

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) elaborates the same

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनस्सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।

ते त्वघ भुञ्जते पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३ ॥

13 The good, who eat the remains of sacrifices, are freed from all sins, but the wicked who cook only for their own sakes, eat sin.

Those who acquire (food) materials solely for the sake of worshipping the Supreme Person (*Paramapuruṣa*) abiding as the Self of Indra and others, and who, after cooking them and worshipping by means of them the Supreme Person, thus situated, effect their bodily sustenance by eating the remains thereof—they alone are freed from all sins which have been acquired from time without beginning and which are inimical to the beholding of the self<sup>122</sup> But those who receive for selfish use the things that are given to them by the Supreme Person abiding as the Self of Indra and others for the sake of worshipping Him, and cook and eat them, they are evil-minded, and eat only sin Sin is here mentioned because sin is the accruing result (These latter), turning away from the realisation of the self, cook only for the attainment of hell

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) again points out that, according to the view of the world and the view of the *sūtras*, everything has its source in the sacrifice, and speaks of the necessity for the performance of the sacrifice as well as of the evil in not performing the same

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भव ।

यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भव ॥ १४ ॥

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भव विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।

तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५ ॥

122 The sins here referred to are all those obstructive of the successful pursuit of *jñāna yoga* which is the means The end is the attainment of God, and this can be brought about only by the eradication of sins opposed, to the attainment of the end through the practice of *bhakti yoga* Śrī Sankara understands by 'all sins' those involving injury to life such as those committed at the *pañca-sūnah* or through negligence or in other ways

एवं प्रवर्तित चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।

अथायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघ पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६ ॥

14 From food all creatures (i.e., bodies) have their being. from rain<sup>123</sup> is the production of food from the sacrifice there arises rain and the sacrifice is what is born out of action.

15 Know that action springs from the brahman (or the physical body) the brahman proceeds from the imperishable (self) : therefore, the brahman which is everywhere is established in the sacrifice.

16 He who does not move in conformity with the wheel thus set in motion here, (he), living the life of sin and revelling in the senses, lives in vain, O son of Prithā (Arjuna)!

“From food all creatures have their being and from rain is the production of food”—this is what can be seen by all people. And that from the sacrifice there arises rain is to be understood from the *śāstras*, from such texts as “Oblations properly thrown into fire, reach the sun, and from the sun arises rain” (*Manu* III 76). And the sacrifice is what is born out of action in the form of the gathering of materials and such other occupations of an active agent. And action (in its turn) springs from the *brahman*

Here what is indicated by the word, ‘*brahman*’, is the physical body which is made up of modifications of the *prakṛti*. For the *prakṛti* is indicated by the word, ‘*brahman*’, in (the scriptural text) “From Him is born this *brahman*, as also the world of matter and soul (*anna*) characterised by name and form” (*Mund Up* I 1.9). Here (in the *Gītā*) also it will be said “The womb (of the universe) is that great *brahman* of Mine” (*B G* XIV 3). Hence, by the teaching that ‘action springs from the *brahman*,’ it is taught that action (*karma*) is a product of the physical body which is of the nature of a modification of the *prakṛti*.

“The *brahman* proceeds from the imperishable” Here what is denoted by the word, ‘imperishable’ (or ‘*akṣara*’), is the individual soul. The body, which is occupied by a soul gratified by food and drink, is capable of action hence the body which forms the

123. The original for ‘rain’ here is ‘*paryanya*’. This is the name of a rain-god. But the word also stands for rain-bearing clouds and rain itself

instrument of action is what proceeds from the imperishable<sup>124</sup>. Therefore, the *brahman* which is everywhere, that is, the body which is with (everyone of) all kinds of persons with different qualifications, is ever established in the sacrifice the meaning is that it has its roots in the sacrifice

Thus is set in motion by the Supreme Person (*Paramapuruṣa*) this wheel—from food (come) the bodies which are endowed with souls and which are indicated by the term, 'creatures', from rain food from the sacrifice rain and the sacrifice from action which forms the function of an agent and action from the body endowed with the soul and again this body endowed with the soul from food. Thus we have (a series) which seems to revolve like a wheel through the mutual relations of cause and effect<sup>125</sup>

124 We can easily follow the cycle thus far—creatures from food, food from rain, rain from sacrifices, sacrifices from action, and action from the body. But the production of the body from the individual soul needs some explanation, and this is suggested here. In order to do work, the body requires to be animated by a soul. In this sense the soul is the 'producer' of the body. And as the soul is gratified by food and drink while animating a body it may in a sense be supposed that its capacity to animate a body arises from food. Alternatively, action arises from the soul animated body such body, in turn, arises from food. 'Bodies animated by souls' are meant by 'creatures' (*bhūtāni*) in III. 14 above (T C)

125 The cycle of causes and effects or the 'wheel' does not seem to be complete on a cursory study of these verses. Indeed Professor Edgerton definitely states that rigorous logical sequence cannot be found among the members of the cycle. But our great *ācāryas* have tried to indicate how the cycle may be completed.

Śrī Rāmānuja, as may be seen above and in the preceding note, solves the difficulty by interpreting 'brahman' as the *prakṛti*, 'akṣara' as the individual soul animating a body, and 'bhūtāni' as embodied souls.

Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'brahman' to be the *Vedas*, 'akṣara' as the Supreme Brahman, 'yajña' as 'apūrva' and 'karma' as the sacrificial ritual. His followers would complete the cycle this way. Creatures study the *Vedas* springing from the Supreme Brahman, and perform sacrifices revealed by them, thereby the gods become pleased, rain results, food grows, more creatures get born, in turn they study the *Vedas* and perform sacrifices, and so forth.

Śrī Madhva interprets 'brahman' as the Supreme Lord and 'akṣara' as the *Vedas*. He would complete the cycle by pointing out that the *Vedas* are made manifest by creatures. The *Vedas* are the cause of the Lord in the sense that they reveal Him to us. The cycle would thus be. Creatures manifest the *Vedas*, the *Vedas* reveal the Brahman, the Brahman inspires the performance of duties, the latter lead to sacrifices, the sacrifices produce rain, rain produces food, from food creatures are born.

He who is engaged in attaining any object in this world—be he one qualified for *karma-yoga* or one qualified for *jñāna-yoga*—if he does not move in conformity with this, that is, does not keep in motion (the above-mentioned wheel of causes and effects)—he, through not effecting bodily sustenance by means of the remains of sacrifices, lives in sin. He whose life is wholly given to the pursuit of sin, or is matured in sin, or is of both these kinds, lives the life of sin. Therefore, indeed, does he become a reveller in the senses, not a reveller in the self. The senses, indeed, become his pleasure-gardens. As one whose mind and body are not nourished by the remains of sacrifices, his *rajas* and *tamas* are thereby made preponderant, being turned away from the vision of the self, he becomes solely delighted in the enjoyments of the senses. Hence, even though (such a person) strives after *jñāna-yoga* and such other practices, since his endeavour is a fruitless one “he lives in vain, O son of Prthā.”

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says that there is no need for the performance of the (five) ‘great sacrifices’ and such other rites, consistently with caste and order of life, only in the case of the person whose seeing of the self does not depend upon any means even as in the case of one who is emancipated <sup>128</sup>

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानव ।

आत्मन्येव च सतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रय ॥ १८ ॥

तस्मादसक्तस्सतत कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुष ॥ १९ ॥

17 But the man whose enjoyment is, indeed, in the self, who is satisfied with the self, and who is delighted only with the self,—for him nothing remains to be accomplished

18 No objective whatever is to be gained for him by what is done, nor any by what is not done here in this world. Nor for him is there anything to be attained as an objective among all things existing

128 Śrī Śaṅkara makes verses 17-19 applicable to the *sannyāsin*. But Śrī Rāmānuja regards them as referring to one who has succeeded in self-realisation through the grace of God and without going through *karma yoga* or *jñāna yoga*

19. Therefore, perform always without attachment the work that ought to be done For the man who performs work without attachment attains to the supreme

But he is not in need of the means of *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga*, who by himself finds enjoyment in the self, that is, is disposed to strive after the realisation of the self, who is satisfied by the self alone and not by food, drink, etc. which are distinct from the self, who is delighted with the self alone and not by pleasure-gardens, garlands, sandal paste, vocal and instrumental music and dance and such other things,<sup>127</sup> and to whom the self alone is sustenance, nourishment, enjoyment and all such things - for him nothing remains to be done for seeing the self, because of his always seeing by himself the essential nature of the self

Therefore, indeed, there is for him 'no objective', that is, no kind of benefit from 'what is done' for seeing the self, that is, from the means for this (self-realisation). Nor is there any harm from 'what is not done', that is, (not practising) the means for seeing the self, because his seeing the self does not depend on any of the means. To this person who is averse to all material things, which are distinct from the self, there is nothing acceptable as an objective to be gained among such (material) elements as the ether etc., with their products, all which elements form particular modifications of the *prakṛti*.<sup>128</sup> This is because the adoption of the means is only for bringing about aversion to these. He is indeed emancipated.

Because not pursuing the means for seeing the self is only for that person whose seeing of the self is not dependent on any means and because *karma-yoga* certainly is better in bringing about the vision of the self even to one who is engaged in some means (for seeing the self), on account of its being easy to do, its freedom from liability

127 Three terms, '*rat*', '*tyajati*' and '*tusati*', are used in verse 17 to describe the relationship between the person described there and his self. '*Rat*' is taken to mean a mere favourable disposition, '*tyajati*' is such liking as is due to a thing which offers nourishment and '*tusati*' the liking for an object of enjoyment.

128 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara: "He has no object whatever to gain for which he should depend on any particular being (from Brahma the creator to immovable objects) if that were the case, action for that purpose might have to be done." Note also that Śrī Rāmānuja renders '*bhūtem*' as among the evolutes of the *prakṛti*.

to interruption, and meditation on the true nature of the self being included in it, and on account of the fact that in the case of one pursuing *jñāna-yoga* also the performance of work is necessary in a small measure :—therefore always perform work until the self is attained,<sup>129</sup> holding that it (i.e., the work) has to be performed without attachment. The man who performs work, looking upon himself as not being the agent, as set out in (the words) 'without attachment' and 'that ought to be done',—(such a man) attains to the supreme by means of *karma-yoga*. The meaning is that he attains the self.<sup>130</sup>

कर्मणैव हि ससिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

20. *Solely by means of karma-yoga, indeed, Janaka and such others attained to perfection*

Because *karma-yoga* is preferable in securing the vision of the self even in the case of one who is fit for *jñāna-yoga*, therefore indeed did royal sages like Janaka and others, who were foremost among the wise, attained to perfection solely by means of *karma-yoga*—that is, they (thus) realised the self.

Thus, after having first stated that for an aspirant for *mokṣa* who is qualified for *karma-yoga*, *karma-yoga* alone is what should be followed, on account of (his) unfitness for *jñāna-yoga*, it was (then) pointed out with reasons that even to one qualified for *jñāna-yoga*, *karma-yoga* indeed is better than *jñāna-yoga*. Now (in verses 20-26) it is said that *karma-yoga* is in every way what ought to be performed by one who is distinguished for wisdom.<sup>131</sup>

लोकसग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २० ॥

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तसदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

129. *T C* notes that the point here is that *karma-yoga*, as taught now, can lead to self-realisation without the need for *jñāna-yoga*.

130. The word, 'supreme', means the self who is superior to the *prakṛis* and who is an object of attainment, as the context here relates to the self as distinguished from the body (*T C*).

131. '*Śiṣṭatā*' has here been translated as 'wisdom'. It really connotes wisdom manifesting itself in disciplined conduct. *Śiṣṭatā* and *śiṣṭa* (whose quality it is) frequently occur in the commentary in the verses that follow and have been translated as 'wisdom' and 'the wise man'. They are from the root, '*śā*', to order, train, instruct. The *śiṣṭa* here is also the *vidvān* of verses 25 and 26, and the *śreṣṭha* of verse 21.



20 *It becomes you to work having regard at least to the guidance and protection of the world*

21 *Whatever a distinguished man does, that alone other men (also do). To whatever extent he does (that), the world follows it*

At least having regard to the guidance and protection of the world, it becomes you to perform work alone. Whatever 'a distinguished man', that is, one who is well known for his knowledge of all the *sāstras* and for his (strict) observance (of all their injunctions), does—that alone others who do not know the entire truth do. In respect of any rite which is being done, to whatever extent, that is, with whatever of its details and auxiliaries a distinguished man does (it), with the same details and auxiliaries alone the people who do not know the truth in its entirety, do it <sup>132</sup>. Hence, for the protection of the world, all the work that is suitable to one's caste and order of life should be always performed by a distinguished man who is well known for his wisdom. Otherwise, the sin produced from ruining the world will bring him down even from *jñāna-yoga*.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्य त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्य वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ २२ ॥

22 *For me, O son of Prthā (Arjuna), there is nothing whatever in the three worlds that ought to be done, there is nothing unobtained that ought to be obtained. Yet I remain engaged in work*

For Me, who am the Lord of all, who have (all) desires accomplished, who am omniscient, whose will is (unfailing) true and who, at My own pleasure, choose to remain in the three worlds in the forms of gods, men and such other beings, there is nothing whatever that ought to be done. Whence (it follows that) there is (for Me) nothing

132 (1) 'Pramāna' in verse 21 is taken in the sense of 'extent', and hence we get the idea of details and auxiliaries in regard to rituals and religious duties. Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva take '*yat-pramānam kurute*' to mean 'whatever he holds as authoritative'. T. C. notes that Yādavaprakāśa's gloss for '*yat-pramānam*' as '*yathābhūtaṁ*' (i.e., in accordance with fact or with authoritative prescription) has the same force as Śrī Rāmānuja's. (11) for the division of the *śaśas* into those who know the whole truth and those who do not know it, see verse 29 below

'unobtained', that is, to be obtained by means of work Yet for the protection of the world, I remain engaged in work alone <sup>133</sup>

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेय जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्तमानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ २३ ॥

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।

सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमां प्रजां ॥ २४ ॥

23 For, if at any time, I do not keep Myself engaged in work without indifference, men will follow My path, O son of Prithā (Arjuna), in every respect

24 These men will go to ruin if I do not do work I shall (then) be the maker of confusion and shall destroy these people

If I, the Lord of all, whose will is (unfailing) true, and whose sport is the creation, sustentation and dissolution of the universe carried out by My will, even though I am born at My pleasure as a mortal man to help the world,<sup>134</sup> —if I, having descended among men in the house of Vasudeva who is the foremost among wise men, do not keep Myself engaged without indifference at all times in work appropriate to that family then, the wise men who do not know everything (in the *śāstras*) will follow this path of Mine who am the son of Vasudeva the foremost among the wise men thinking that in every way this alone is the righteous course And they will attain hell, not having won the self through failure to perform what ought to be done and also through the sin arising from (such) non-performance of duty

If I do not do the work appropriate to (My) family, in that way alone all the wise men, determining their duties by depending on My practice, will go to ruin simply from not doing (their duties) That is, they will become lost And I shall become the maker of confusion to all wise men by failure to protect the code of conduct prescribed in the *śāstras* For this very reason I shall be destroying all these people <sup>135</sup> Even so, if you, being Arjuna, the son of Pāṇdu,

133 T C cites V P (VI 7 71-2) as an interesting parallel passage

134. An echo of V P (V 30 80) See Note 8 above on p 4.

135 Failure to perform the rituals and duties proper to one's caste and stage of life causes spiritual damage through the intermediate state of confusion of duties A Kṣatriya giving up fighting in war, which is what a Brahmin's duty is, offers an illustration of such confusion From such confusion follows disqualification for the performance of enjoined duties and rituals This constitutes the spiritual damage (T C)

the younger brother of Yudhishthira and the leader of the wise claim the privilege of following *jñāna-yoga*, then wise aspirants for *mokṣa*, who do not know everything and follow your practice, not knowing their own qualifications and not exerting themselves, according to their fitness, to practise devotion to *karma*, will be ruined. Therefore, work alone should be done by one who is worthy of being distinguished as wise

सक्ता. कर्मण्यविद्वासो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वास्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसग्रहम् ॥ २५ ॥

न बुद्धिभेद जनयेदज्ञाना कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान् युक्तस्माचरन् ॥ २६ ॥

25 In the manner in which unlearned men do work with attachment to work, O Bhārata (Arjuna), in the same manner should be learned man who is desirous of promoting the welfare of the world, do work without attachment

26 He (i.e., the learned man) should not cause distraction of mind to the ignorant who are attached to work, but, performing (work) with devotion, should inspire love (in them) for all kinds of work

The unlearned are those who do not know the entire truth about the self. (They) have 'attachment to work' that is, they are unavoidably connected with work. On account of their not completely knowing the self, they are not qualified for *jñāna-yoga* which is of the form of its practice (i.e., putting into practice complete knowledge about the self). They are (however) qualified for *karma-yoga*<sup>136</sup>. In the manner in which they practise *karma-yoga* for the sake of seeing the self, in the same way one who is renowned as wise, who is unattached

136 T. C. here anticipates and argues against a modern view that the *Gītā* teaches the gospel of the pursuit of worldly or secular activity. The unlearned men of verse 26 are not the worldly-minded, and the work to which they are attached is not secular activity. Were it so, the wise would be called upon to indulge in secular activities giving up religious duties and works. This goes against the entire trend of the teaching so far. Moreover, the context here is concerned with the nature of the self and the means for self-realisation. It is pointed out therefore that the unlearned are those having imperfect knowledge of the self, and the work to which they are attached is enjoined duty and rite.

to work on account of fully knowing the self, and who for the protection of the people wishes by his own behaviour to determine the virtuous code of conduct for the wise—(such a person) should practise only *kar-mayoga*, even though qualified for *jñāna-yoga*.

Do not cause distraction of mind to ignorant aspirants after *mokṣa* to the effect (i.e., by making them believe) that there is a means for securing the vision of the self other than *kar-ma-yoga*. They are unable to practise *jñāna-yoga* because of (their) incomplete knowledge about the self. They are attached to action. And they are qualified for *kar-ma-yoga* on account of their being settled only in work by the subtle impressions of beginningless *kar-ma*.

What then (follows from all this)? Even though one is qualified for *jñāna-yoga* by reason of full knowledge about the self, one should do work, holding the view that, as stated previously, *kar-ma-yoga* alone, independently of *jñāna-yoga*, is the means for seeing the self, and should stimulate love for all kinds of work among those who do not know the entire truth about the self<sup>127</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches (in verse 27-30) the manner in which the self is to be thought of as not being an agent, as a required element of *kar-ma-yoga*, after pointing out the distinction between the wise and the unwise among those practising *kar-ma-yoga* :

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।

बहूङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ॥ २७ ॥

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।

गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥ २८ ॥

27 Actions are being done in every way by the *guṇas* of the *prakṛti*. He whose nature is led astray by egotism thinks, "I am the agent."

127 ' *Loka-saṅgraha* ' is uniting the world into a single group bent on following one's conduct, such uniting being intended for the welfare of the world. 'The subtle impressions of beginningless *kar-ma*' may be explained as the particular impressions left by virtuous and sinful actions leading on to the performance of further virtuous and sinful actions in later births. Or they are the impressions left from experiences in earlier bodies and capable of causing the recollection that stirs later bodies to action. ' *Buddhi-bheda* ' is radically changing the attitude of mind. (T. C.)

28. But O mighty-armed (Arjuna), he who knows the truth about the distinctions in regard to the *gunas* and in regard to the actions (done by them) does not become attached, thinking that the *gunas* are operating in relation to (their) products

With reference to actions which are being done by *sattva* and other *gunas* of the *prakṛti*, in accordance with their own nature, he whose nature is led astray by egotism thinks, "I am the agent" He whose self is led astray by *ahankāra* is (here spoken of as) 'ahankāra-vimūḍhātman' Obviously, 'ahankāra' is the feeling of "I" in regard to the *prakṛti* which is not the thing denoted by "I".<sup>138</sup> The meaning is that he who is ignorant of the real nature of the self on account of this (*ahankāra*), thinks with reference to actions done by the *gunas*, "I am the doer (of them)"

He who knows the truth about the distinctions in regard to the *gunas* and (their) actions, that is, about the distinctions among *sattva* and other *gunas* and the distinctions among their respective actions<sup>139</sup>—he, thinking that *sattva* and other *gunas* are operating in relation to their own active modes, that is, their own products, is not attached to the actions of the *gunas* with the feeling, "I am the doer"<sup>140</sup>

प्रकृतेर्गुणसमूहात्सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।

तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान् कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥ २९ ॥

29 Those who are led astray by the *gunas* of *prakṛti* get attached to the actions done by the *gunas* He who knows the whole (truth) should not cause those dull persons who do not know the whole to move away (from karma-yoga)

138 *Ahankāra* here indicates *dehatma-bhrama*, mistaking the body for the soul (T C)

139 Śrī Saṅkara and Śrī Madhva take the first 'gunas' to mean the senses and the second 'gunas' to be the objects of sense

140 The argument here is that all action is to be traced to embodied souls. The bodies really do the work. Their power to work is due to the *gunas* of the *prakṛti* operating in them. Each body has some *guna* dominant, and it works largely according to the impulses given by that dominant *guna*. Particular kinds of activities are due to particular *gunas*. The *guna* of the work is determined by the composition of *gunas* in the body which does the work. That is why Arjuna is advised to regard all work as merely *gunas* operating in relation to their products (See L G, I pp 241-48).

Those who do not know the whole truth are those who are striving to see the self and are led astray about the nature of the self as it is by the *gunas* of the *prakṛti* on account of their contact with the *prakṛti*, they become attached to the actions done by the *gunas*—that, is, only to religious rites (constituting *karma-yoga*) and not to the real nature of the self which is different from it (i.e., the *prakṛti*). Therefore, for the reason that they are not able to practice *jñāna-yoga*, their qualification is only for *karma-yoga*. One who knows the whole truth should not, by himself remaining engaged in *jñāna-yoga*, cause such men who are dull-witted and who do not know the whole to move away. Those dull men who follow the practices of a great man, when they see him risen above *karma-yoga*, will have their minds led away from *karma-yoga*. Therefore, the great man, while himself staying in *karma-yoga*, should, through his knowledge of the true nature of the self, meditate on the self not being the agent, and by showing that *karma-yoga* by itself is an independent means for seeing the self, satisfy those who do not know the whole (truth). This is the meaning.

The superiority of this (*karma-yoga*), indeed, over *jñāna-yoga* even for those who are qualified for *jñāna-yoga* has already been stated. Hence one who is renowned should follow this (*karma-yoga*) alone with a view to protect the people.

The method of performing duties and rituals after ascribing agency to the *gunas* by ascertaining the essential characteristics of the self as distinct from the *prakṛti* is (thus) taught.<sup>141</sup> Contemplation of agency in regard to the *gunas* is this (i.e., is to be understood thus). The agency of the self does not arise from the essential nature of the self, but is consequent upon its contact with the *gunas*.<sup>142</sup> Hence by discriminating between what is acquired (by means of this contact) and not acquired (in the absence of such contact), it has to be concluded that (this agency) is due to the *gunas*.

Now is taught the necessity for the performance of work, after ascribing the agency due to the *gunas*, to the Supreme Person who

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141 Its value lies in helping one to distinguish the body from the soul. But it is only a half way house to seeing God as the agent of all actions as taught in the next verse.

142. The agency here discussed is that which lies behind the creation of *pāpa* and *puṇya* in the state of *samsāra*. The inherent agency of the soul remains even in the state of *mokṣa*. See *S B* (II 3 33).

constitutes the Soul of all, by showing that the character of the individual selves, on account of their constituting the body of the Supreme Person, is that of subservience to Him

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि सन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वर ॥ ३० ॥

30 Making over all actions to Me with a mind devoted to the self, free from desire and selfishness, fight without (the) fever (of desire and anxiety)

Perform all proscribed duties such as war, free from desire and selfishness and without (the) fever (of desire and anxiety), making over, with a mind devoted to the self all actions to Me, who am the Lord of all and form the inner soul of all beings. 'Adhyātmachetas' is that mind which is (fixed in) the self. The meaning (of 'by a mind devoted to the self') is 'by means of the knowledge relating to the essential nature of the self' as determined in hundreds of Vedic texts.

That this self is to be set into activity by the Supreme Person,<sup>143</sup> that it constitutes His body, and that the Supreme Person is the impeller are taught by *śruti* texts like the following. "He who has entered within, is the ruler of all things that are born and is the self of all" (*Taitt. Ār.* III 21), "Him who has entered inside and is the doer" (*Ibīd.* III 23), and "He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body is the self and who controls the self from within, He is Your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Mādh. Brh. Up.* III 7 22).

(To the same effect) there are also *smṛti* texts like "Him who is the ruler of all" (*Manu.* XII 122). (Here also in the *Gūṇā*) He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa later on) will say "And I am seated in the hearts of all,

143 The Lord, through the *guṇas*, causes the activities of the self in the state of *samsāra*. Under *S. B.* (II 3 40-41), an attempt is made to reconcile the reality of moral choice with the *Brahman* being the cause of all things. The analogy of a common fund belonging to two persons is used. "it is not possible for one of them to make it the property of a stranger without the consent of other." Still, "because the consent of the other is brought about by him alone, the fruit thereof accrues to him only." The commandments of the *śāstras* are held to be meaningful because the Lord requires initiative on the part of the self. On the question whether the Lord is neutral in regard to the initial effort of the self in regard to any action, there is controversy between the Southern and Northern Schools of Śrī Rāmānuja's followers.

from Me come memory, knowledge and the faculty of reason " (XV. 15); " The Lord dwells, O Arjuna, in the region of the heart of all beings, causing all the beings that are mounted on the machine (of the body) to revolve (i. e., to work) by means of the *prakṛti* (which is under His control and in accordance with its *guṇas*) " (XVIII. 61) Therefore, make over to Me, who am the Supreme Person, all activities, regarding them as being done by Me, by meditating on the self as being of such a nature as to be set into activity by Me only, on account of its being My body And perform them, looking upon them merely as services to Me Becoming free from desire in regard to their fruits and hence free from selfish attachment to the activity therein, perform actions like fighting in the war without the fever (of anxiety)

Constantly bear in mind that the Supreme Person who is the Lord of all and for whose gratification all things exist, gets His own actions done, of His own free will, for the sole purpose of pleasing Himself, by His own means and with the individual self owned by Him as the agent <sup>144</sup> Become free from selfish attachment to the actions Become free also from the mental fever arising from such thoughts as " How will it be with me with an ancient endless accumulation of sins, originating from time without beginning ? " Follow *karma-yoga* comfortably, thinking that the Supreme Person Himself, propitiated by actions (performed in this manner) will release (you) from bondage <sup>145</sup>

His lordship over all and proprietorship over all things are established by *śruti* texts like " Him who is the supremely great lord of lords, Him who is the God of gods " (*S'vet Up* VI. 2), " The owner of the universe " (*Taitt Nār* XI. 3), " The owner of owners " (*Śvet Up*

144. The all-powerful Lord can Himself do all things desired He makes the selves agents to make meaningful moral choice and enjoyment of fruits by them (T C)

145. In *Vīśiṣṭādvaita* literature God in His relations with the world is described as *śeṣa* All things in the universe, animate as well as inanimate, are conceived as standing in the relation of *śeṣa* to Him Śrī Rāmānuja says in his *Vedārthasaṃgraha* " All eternal and non-eternal things which are made up of intelligent and non-intelligent things have an essential nature which consists always in being acceptable through the desire to uphold the excellence of the Lord, and so all things are subordinate (*śeṣa*) to the Lord, and the Lord of all is their principal (*śeṣin*) " (Translation by M B Varadaraja Iyengar, *Brahma-sūtra*, XVII 156-7)



VI. 7) etc Lordship is the character of being the ruler . proprietorship is the character of being the owner

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says (here) that this (teaching about the *karma-yoga* independent of *jñāna-yoga*) indeed is the meaning which actually forms the essential element of the *Upaniṣads* :

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवा ।

श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥ ३१ ॥

31 Those men who always practise this teaching of Mine, (even) those who possess faith (in it) and those who do not cavil (at it)—even they are set free from the bondage of karma (lit from karma) <sup>146</sup>

Those men, who, being qualified to follow the *śāstras*, convince themselves in regard to this teaching of Mine, “Such is alone the meaning of *śāstras*”, and act accordingly, those who become endowed with faith in this meaning of the *śāstras* even though they do not follow it in practice, and those who, even though lacking faith, do not cavil (at it), saying that the meaning of the *śāstras* cannot arise in this way which means that they do not find fault with this interpretation of the *śāstras* which possesses very great merit—all these men are set free from all the *karmas* which have come from beginningless time and are the causes of bondage

On account of the word, ‘*api*’ (‘even’), in ‘*te*’ *pr karmabhiḥ*” (‘even they from *karmas*’), these men (described above) are divided (into three classes) <sup>147</sup> The meaning is that those who, even though not practising (the teaching) now, have faith in this meaning of *śāstras* and (those who similarly) do not cavil at it, will be rid of (their) sins by their faith and freedom from ill-will (respectively) Soon, they will practise this very meaning of the *śāstras* and be liberated

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa here) speaks of the evil befalling those who do not practise this teaching of the *Upaniṣads* which is approved of by the Lord, those who do not place faith (in it), and those who cavil (at it).

<sup>146</sup> Śrī Madhva understands ‘*karmabhiḥ*’ as ‘by *karmas* done without desire for fruits’.

<sup>147</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva take the whole stanza to refer only to one class of persons

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।

सर्वज्ञानविमूढास्तान् विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२ ॥

32 But those who do not practise this teaching of Mine (and) those who carp at it—know them to be seriously deluded in relation to all kinds of knowledge, destitute of reason and lost

But those who do not follow this teaching of Mine to the effect that the substance known as the self in its entirety has Me for its support, is completely subservient to Me and is to be set in activity solely by Me, *i e*, those who do not perform all actions meditating in this manner—those who do not have faith (in this teaching)<sup>148</sup> and those who keep on carping—know them to be highly deluded in all kinds of knowledge and in consequence wholly lost and destitute of reason. For the function of reason is the determination of the real nature of things. Because of its absence, they (*i e*, the people mentioned above) are destitute of reason, (and hence) perverted in knowledge and highly deluded in all ways.

Thus it has been taught to this effect. To one having contact with the *prakṛti* agency accrues from the preponderance of (one or other) of its *gunas*. And this (agency) is dependent on the Supreme Person. Thinking thus, *karma-yoga* alone should be practised both by the person who is fit for *karma-yoga* and by him who is fit for *jñāna-yoga* (This has to be done) because *karma-yoga* is easy to practise, free from the liability to interruption, and not dependent on anything else on account of its including the knowledge of the self within itself and because the other (*i e*, *jñāna-yoga*) is difficult to do, beset with possibilities of mistakes and is dependent on action for the sake of sustaining the body and such other (necessary) purposes. And for a person who is distinguished, thus (*karma-yoga*) especially is what ought to be practised.

Hereafter, in the remaining portion of this chapter, the liability *jñāna-yoga* to mistakes, on account of its difficulty of performance, is taught.

148 This verse is taken to describe those who are the opposites of the persons described in verse 31. Hence those lacking faith are also mentioned in the commentary.

सदृश चेष्टते स्वस्या प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृति यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहं किं करिष्यति ॥ ३३ ॥

33 *Even the man of knowledge acts in conformity with his own nature. All beings follow (the bent of their own) nature. What will restraint do?*

Even the man who has the knowledge that the *sāstras* teach that the nature of the self, which is distinct from the *prakṛti* is endowed with such qualities (as have already been mentioned) and that it, indeed, has to be always meditated upon<sup>149</sup>—(even such a person) acts only with respect to material objects in conformity with his own nature, that is, with the old subtle impressions (accompanying his soul from birth to birth). How is this? “All beings follow (the bent of their own) nature.” Creatures placed in contact with non-intelligent matter follow only (their inherent tendencies in the form of) subtle impressions which have continued to act from beginningless time. What will restraints imposed by the *sāstras* do to these beings who follow (the tendencies of their) subtle impressions?<sup>150</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa then) explains the process of becoming the follower of (one's own) nature.

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।

तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४ ॥

34 *For every sense, attachment and aversion towards the object of the sense are well fixed. Let not anyone come under the power of those two, for they are his foes.*

An unavoidable attachment has been established for the organs of sense like the ear towards their objects like sound, and for organs of action like that of speech towards their objects like speech. (This liking is) in the form of a desire to enjoy these objects—(a desire) which is produced by ancient subtle impressions. And when then enjoyment is obstructed, an unavoidable aversion is established.

149 The knowledge mentioned cannot be secular knowledge, nor knowledge arising from direct vision of the self. Hence it has to be understood as such knowledge as is needed to make one undertake *jñāna yoga*. (T. C.)

150 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara: “What will restraint do—by Me or by anyone else?”

Thus these two bring under their control the man who strives towards *jñāna-yoga* and who has subdued all his senses (forcibly and for the time being) and violently direct him towards their own (i.e., of the sense organs) activities. And then this person, losing interest in the experience of the self, becomes completely lost. Let not one, by undertaking *jñāna-yoga*, come under the power of attachment and aversion, and perish. These two—attachment and aversion—are, indeed, his invincible enemies and prevent the practice of *jñāna*.<sup>151</sup>

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधन श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ ३५ ॥

35 Better is one's own duty (of *karma-yoga*), though defective (in performance), than another's duty (of *jñāna-yoga*) carried out in all its details. Better is death in one's own duty. Another's duty brings on fear.

Therefore, *karma-yoga*, which, on account of its being easy to do, constitutes one's own duty, and which, though defective,<sup>152</sup> is free from the liability to interruption, is better than *jñāna-yoga*, which, though carried out in all its details, that is, practised for a short time, constitutes another's duty on account of its being difficult to do for one having contact with the *prakṛti* and is liable to interruption.<sup>153</sup> For a person who remains in *karma-yoga*, which has become his duty on account of its fitness to be practised by him, even death without success in one birth is to be preferred. For there will come to him in the next birth at least the undisturbed (and complete) performance of *karma-yoga* on account of the destruction of interruptions.<sup>154</sup> *Jñāna-yoga* is fraught with fear on account of its liability to interruption to anyone in contact with the *prakṛti*, having become another's duty by reason of its being incapable of easy attainment by himself.

151 Śrī Śaṅkara picturesquely compares attachment and aversion to highway robbers on one's path to salvation.

152 That is, performed defectively. All the essential features of *karma-yoga* may not have been gone through fully. (T. C.)

153 Since Arjuna thinks of giving up war as his own duty, it is enough to point out to him that war is duty. Well performed *para-dharma* and ill-performed *śiṣa-dharma* can mean only *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* in the context. (T. C.)

154 In *karma-yoga* the senses are presented with experiences of the type they are accustomed to. Therefore there cannot be a complete break. See also II. 40 and VI. 40 about the successful completion of *karma-yoga* in future births. (T. C.)

अर्जुन उवाच—

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।

अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ ३६ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

36 But impelled by what, O Vārṣṇeya (Kṛṣṇa)! does this person (undertaking jñāna-yoga), commit sin, though unwilling, as if incited (to it) by force?<sup>155</sup>

Impelled by what does the man who is striving towards jñāna-yoga commit in in the form of enjoying the objects of the senses, as if incited (thereto) by force, even though he is unwilling by himself to enjoy the objects of the senses?<sup>156</sup>

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भव ।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ ३७ ॥

37 This (cause of sin) is the great devourer, desire, born from the *gunas* called *rajas*. This itself is anger, the great sinner. Know this (desire) to be the enemy here.

The highly devouring desire has its origin in the *guna* (called) *rajas*, which is produced by ancient, subtle impressions, and which has for its objects sound and other such things (i.e., objects of the senses). (It) is the enemy to him who is placed in contact with the *prakṛti*, made up of the *gunas* functioning by way of rise and subsidence and who has undertaken to strive towards the attainment of jñāna. (It) drags him into the objects of the senses. It is this (desire) alone which, when obstructed in its course, develops into anger towards those persons who form the cause of (such) obstruction. It is a great sinner, and (it) prompts him into doing injury to others and such other acts.

155. T. C. notices and rejects a reading of Yādavaprakāśa for the second line: "Anicchamān pi balādātādyeva niyojitaḥ."

156. The subtle impressions from previous actions influence a person through desire and will. But why should one be forced to act against his conscious resolves, as if he were an inanimate thing driven by wind or water?

Know this which is born of the *guṇa* (called) *rajas* to be the natural foe of *jñāna-yoga* <sup>157</sup>

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च ।

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥

38 As a flame is covered over by smoke, and a mirror by dirt, as a foetus (in the womb) is enveloped by a bag, so by this (desire) this world (of embodied beings) is enveloped

As a fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror by dirt, and as a foetus is enveloped by a bag, so by this desire this collection of beings is enveloped <sup>158</sup>

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa (he)) teaches the manner of the envelopment

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।

कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥

39 The knowledge (of the self) of the sentient is enveloped by this eternal enemy, O Arjuna (son of Kuntī), which is in the form of desire, is difficult to gratify and is insatiable

The knowledge having the self for its subject of this embodied person whose nature is knowledge, is concealed by this eternal enemy which is in the form of desire, which produces infatuation for sense-objects which 'is difficult to gratify', that is, has for its objects things unworthy of attainment, and is insatiable, that is, free from the sense of being completely satisfied (under any circumstances)

Here (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains with the help of what instruments this desire rules over the self

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।

एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

157 (i) Watered with *rajas*, the seeds of subtle impressions left by the experience of the objects of the senses sprout into desire and anger (ii) Though desire belongs to the self and *rajas* to the body, contact with the *prakṛti* dominated by *rajas* causes the rise of desire in the self, even as contact with heat causes a boil to rise in the hand (T C)

158 The three similes are intended respectively to indicate that desire is born along with every creature by the force of beginningless *vāsanā*, that it returns again and again even after being sent away, and that it cannot be got rid of by one's own effort (T C)

40 *The senses, the manas and the intellect are declared to be its instruments of governance. By these it leads astray the embodied soul after concealing his knowledge.*

The senses, the *manas* and the intellect are its instruments of governance, because by means of these this desire rules over the self. Through these senses, the *manas* and the intellect, which have become the instruments of governance for desire and which are devoted to sense-objects,—(this desire), after concealing knowledge, leads astray the embodied self who is in contact with the *prakṛti*. The meaning is that it deludes (the self) in various ways, makes (the embodied self) disinclined for knowledge of the self, but intent upon the enjoyment of the sense-objects.

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येन ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

41 *Therefore, O best of the Bharatas, (Arjuna), kill this sinful thing that destroys (both) the knowledge (of the self) and<sup>159</sup> the discrimination (relating thereto), after restraining the senses at the (very) beginning.*

For whatever reason,<sup>160</sup> in the case of a person who is engaged in *jñāna-yoga*, which is of the form of giving up the activities of all the senses, this enemy in the form of desire brings about aversion to the self by creating liking for the objects of the senses—for that same reason, you, who are devoted to the activities of the senses, on account of being in contact with the *prakṛti*, should, 'at the beginning', that is, at the very beginning of the practice of the means for the attainment of *mokṣa*, restrain the senses in *karma-yoga*, which is adapted to the activities of the senses. And then you should kill, that is, destroy this sinful enemy, which is in the form of desire and which is the destroyer of knowledge and discrimination, that is, of knowledge relating to the real nature of the self and of the discrimination relating thereto.

159 *Vyāñāna* may mean such knowledge of particulars about the *ātman* as help to distinguish it from other things—knowledge of its being the knower, the experiencer, the doer, etc. (T C)

160 That is, because of the difficulty of the performance of *Jñāna yoga*. (T C)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa then) speaks of that which is the most important among the enemies of knowledge

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्य पर मन ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु स ॥ ४२ ॥

42 The senses are supreme, they say The manas is greater than the senses The intellect is greater than the manas But what is greater than the intellect is that (desire)

The senses are mentioned as the most important in opposition to knowledge, because when the senses are busy with their objects, knowledge relating to the self does not make headway. The manas is greater than the senses. Even though the senses are withdrawn (from their objects), if the manas is devoted to sense-objects, knowledge of the self cannot arise. The intellect (buddhi) is greater than even the manas. When the manas is averse to any other activity, (that is, is indifferently interested in the senses) if there is a perverted decision, (then also) knowledge cannot arise. Even though all these up to the intellect are withdrawn from activity, still, if desire which is synonymous with will, and which has its origin in rajas, is functioning—by itself it obstructs the knowledge of the self by causing the senses etc. to work in its direction. This is thus taught here: "But what is greater than the intellect is that." The meaning is that what is greater than the intellect—it is desire.<sup>161</sup>

161 (1) Śrī Sāṅkara takes the self to be that which is above the intellect. Śrī Madhva says definitely that the Supreme Self is meant and draws attention to the parallel with *Kaṭh Up* (I. 10-11): "The objects of the senses are, indeed, superior to the senses, and the manas is superior to the objects of the senses, and the faculty of intellection (buddhi) is superior to the manas, the great self is superior to the faculty of intellection, the body (avyakta) is superior to the great thing (self), the (Supreme) Person (puruṣa) is superior to the body, there is nothing superior to the Supreme Person, that is the highest limit, that is the highest goal." (This passage is critically explained in *S B* 1.4.1-6). *T C* points out that the two passages are not on all fours. The context here envisages the enemies of the self in ascending order of importance, and the self itself cannot be its most formidable enemy. Indeed, immediately preceding this passage, desire (kāma) has been designated as such enemy. Jayatīrtha's gloss on Madhva's commentary refers to Bhāskara also having taken desire as that which is superior to the intellect. In another view referred to by *T C* it is identified with the *ahankāra*. (ii) *T C* explains how the buddhi can influence an indifferent manas and turn it to sense experience. Sleep, indolence, etc., can make the mind take less than an active interest in the experience of the senses. The buddhi can turn this interest active, when prompted by vīśaṇā and helped by rajas. The desire for the vision of the self comes more rarely and is weaker than the desire for the experience of the senses.



एव बुद्धे परं बुद्ध्वा सस्तम्यात्मानमात्मना ।

जहि शत्रु महाबाहो कामरूप दुरासदम् ॥ ४३ ॥

43 Thus, knowing that which is greater than the intellect and establishing the *manas* with the help of the intellect (in *karma-yoga*), O mighty armed (Arjuna), kill this enemy which is in the form of desire and is difficult to be reached

Thus, knowing desire, which is greater than the intellect, to be the enemy opposed to *jñāna-yoga* and fixing the *manas* (or *ātman*) in *karma-yoga* with the help of the intellect (or *ātman*), kill, that is, destroy this enemy which is in the form of desire and is difficult to be reached <sup>162</sup>

162 Śrī Madhva also takes the same view as Śrī Rāmānuja in regard to the two senses in which the word, 'ātman', is used in verse 43. Śrī Śaṅkara interprets the verse as teaching that the self is to be fixed in the self

## CHAPTER IV

In the third chapter, it has been shown with reasons that for an aspirant after *mokṣa* who is in contact with the *prakṛti*, *karma-yoga* alone is what ought to be practised by him, on account of his having no qualification for *jñāna-yoga* all at once and even in the case of one who is qualified for *jñāna-yoga*, the practice of *karma-yoga* alone, preceded by meditation on (the self) not being the agent (of any action) is better. It has also been taught that especially in the case of a person who is distinguished for his wisdom, *karma-yoga*, indeed, is what ought to be practised by him.

Now in the fourth (chapter) the necessity for the practice of this very *karma-yoga* is further confirmed on account of its having been taught at the very commencement of the age of (the present) Manu (i.e., *Manvantara*)<sup>163</sup> for the uplift of the whole world. And then in consequence of knowledge (of the self) being included under it, its having the form of *jñāna-yoga* is demonstrated. Thereafter, the nature of *karma-yoga*, its varieties, and the importance of the element of knowledge in it are taught. Also the truth about the incarnations of the Lord is incidentally stated.<sup>164</sup>

**श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—**

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

163. A day of Brahmā the creator is called a *kalpa* and is equal to 4,320 million years. This is divided into 14 equal periods, each presided over by a Manu. The present Manu is the seventh in the *kalpa* and is known as Vaisvata, He is a son of the sun god.

164. It may be seen that Śrī Rāmānuja makes it deal with six topics instead of four, as in *G. S.* (8). "Incidentally, there is mention of His own nature (then) in regard to *karma* (i.e., *karma yoga*) (its) being other than *karma* (i.e., of the nature of *jñāna*), its varieties and the importance of (the element of) *jñāna* (in *karma yoga*) are taught in the fourth chapter." The additional two topics mentioned by Śrī Rāmānuja are confirming that *karma yoga* ought to be done and the nature of *karma yoga*. The former merely clarifies the context in which the teaching about the nature of the Lord is given. The varieties of *karma-yoga* cannot be taught without its essential nature being described.

एव परम्पराप्राप्तमिम राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥ २ ॥

स एवाय मया तेऽद्य योग प्रोक्त पुरातनः ।

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्य ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ ३ ॥

### THE LORD SAID

1 *This imperishable yoga I had explained well to Vivasvat (the sun-god) Vivasvat taught it to (his son) Manu, and Manu declared (it) to (his son) Ikṣvāku*

2 *Royal sages came to know of this (karma-yoga) thus handed down from generation to generation O destroyer of foes (Arjuna), that yoga was lost on account of the lapse of a long period of time*

3 *It is this same yoga which has now been taught to you by Me, as you are devoted to Me and are also friend For it is indeed the highest mystery*

That *yoga* which has been taught to you, it should not be regarded as having been taught now merely in order to create enthusiasm for war I Myself had taught this *yoga* to Vivasvat at the beginning of (the present) Manu's age for the uplift of the whole world as (an element in) the means for the attainment of *mokṣa* which constitutes the highest end of human life Vivasvat (taught it) to Manu, and Manu to Ikṣvāku This *yoga*, thus handed down by tradition from one generation to another, the royal sages of old<sup>165</sup> knew On account of the lapse of a long time, and because of the dulness of the intellect of those who learned (lit listened to) it from time to time, it almost became lost It is the same ancient *yoga*, with its essential character unaltered, which has been taught by Me to you, who, out of friendship and exceeding love and devotion, have sought refuge with Me alone The meaning is that it (this *karma-yoga*) has been taught in extenso with all its details Since it is the most secret knowledge taught in the *Vedānta*, it cannot be understood or explained by anyone other than Myself

165 Such as Aśvapati, Ambariṣa and Janaka. (T. C)

In this context (of confirming the teaching of *karma-yoga*), in order to know the truth about the Lord's incarnation, as it actually was, Arjuna said :

अर्जुन उवाच—

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।

कथमेतद्विजानीया त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ४ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

4 Your birth was recent, the birth of Vivasvat ancient How then am I to understand that You taught this in the beginning?

According to the reckoning of time, Your birth was indeed recent, contemporaneous with our births And the birth of Vivasvat was, according to the reckoning of time, ancient, reckoned as (taking place) before twenty-eight cycles of four *yugas* each <sup>166</sup> How can I understand as true that You taught in the beginning, (a statement) which is inconceivable?

It may be argued that there is no inconsistency here because it was possible (for Śrī Kṛṣṇa) to have taught (Vivasvat) in a former birth, and also because to great men, memory of what was done in former births is quite proper

It is not that this person (i e , Arjuna) does not know the son of Vasudeva who is the speaker (before him) as the Lord of all For he (i e , Arjuna) says later on “ You are the Supreme *Brahman*, the Supreme Light and the Supreme Purifier All the *ṛṣis* proclaim You as the eternal, divine *Puruṣa*, the Primal God, the unborn and the all-pervading So also declare the divine sage Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa You Yourself also tell me so ” (X 12-13)

It (i e , the same truth about Śrī Kṛṣṇa) was also often heard (by Arjuna) from Bhīṣma and others during the *rājasūya* sacrifice of

166. A cycle of four *yugas* is equal to 4,320,000 years About 71 of them are found in every Manu's epoch In that of the present Manu 28 such cycles have elapsed

Yudhiṣṭhira<sup>167</sup> and on similar occasions in sentences like this : "Kṛṣṇa alone is (the cause of) the origin and dissolution of all beings (and worlds). For this universe, containing things both animate and inanimate, was brought into existence and exists for the sake of Kṛṣṇa" (M B II 41 23). "For the sake of Kṛṣṇa" means that the entire universe is subservient to and derives its sustenance from Kṛṣṇa and exists for His glory

It may be said here (by way of reply as follows) Pārtha (i.e., Arjuna) certainly knows this son of Vasudeva as the Divine Lord. But this is his intention, when, even though knowing (Him), he questions as if he did not know (Him) Is the birth of the Lord of all, who is the opposite of all that is evil and the sole seat of auspicious qualities, who is omniscient, whose will is unfailingly true and all of whose desires are fulfilled - (is the birth of such a being) so as to be (i.e., to seem) of the same kind as that of the gods, men and others who are subject to the influence of *karma*, false like the illusions of magic and such other phenomena, or is it real? In case of (His) birth being real, what is the manner of the birth? Of what is (His) body made? What is the cause of the birth? When is the birth? For what purpose is the birth? The significance of Arjuna's question is to be understood (in this way) from the way in which it is answered (by Śrī Kṛṣṇa) <sup>168</sup>

### श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।

तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्स्य परन्तप ॥ ५ ॥

### THE LORD SAID

5. *Many births of Mine have passed away, Arjuna, as well as (many of) yours I know them all, but you know them not, O slayer of foes*

<sup>167</sup> The *rājasuya* is a great sacrifice which can be performed only by an emperor Arjuna's eldest brother, Yudhiṣṭhira, performed it after the subjugation of all other kings The quoted verse is taken from the speech of Bhīṣma recommending the first honours to Kṛṣṇa

<sup>168</sup> Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answers indicate, because of His omniscience, the true significance of Arjuna's question The assumptions behind the question are hinted at in the description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa here as the Lord of all, the opposite of all that is evil, etc These are set out in the form of some syllogisms by the T C The Lord cannot really have any birth or body, because He is not subject to *karma*, because there is no other Lord to command Him, because His knowledge is not limited, because His will cannot be obstructed, and because He has no unsatisfied desires From these arise the doubt that the Lord's incarnate form may be illusory

By this, the reality of the (Lord's) birth is taught, through the statement, "Many births of Mine have passed away", and because also of the mention by way of illustration of "as well as (many of yours)"

The manner of the (divine) incarnation, the reality of (His) body and the cause of (His) birth are (then) spoken of

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।

प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ ६ ॥

6 Though I am unborn and inexhaustible in My own nature, though I am the Lord of all beings, yet abiding in My own nature, I am born of My own free will <sup>169</sup>

Abiding in My own nature, I am born by My own free will, without in the least giving up any of the special qualities of the Supreme Ruler such as not being born, imperishability, being the Lord of all etc. 'Prakṛti' means (one's own) natural disposition. Abiding in My own natural disposition, with My own form only,<sup>170</sup> I am born by My own free will. This is the meaning.

His peculiar nature, indeed, becomes evident from the following and other similar *śruti* texts. "Him of sun-like lustre beyond master" (*Śvet Up* III 8), "Him who dwells far away from matter" (*Taitt Sam* II 2 12 5), "This golden Person within the sun" (*Chānd Up* I 6 6), "Within it (i.e. the etherial space of the heart) there is the Person mind-made (i.e. capable of being grasped solely by the purified mind), immortal, golden" (*Taitt Up* I 6 1), "All *nimeses* were born out of the lightning-like person" (*Taitt Nār* I 8), "He who has light for His form, who wills the truth, who is the self of the ether, who is

169 Śrī Śaṅkara renders 'prakṛti' as "the *Māyā* of Viṣṇu, made up of the three energies, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, to which this whole universe is subject and by which deluded the whole world knows not Vāsudeva, its own Self". He further explains "I am born through my own *māyā*, I have a body, and a birth, but not in reality unlike other people". (A Mahādeva Śāstri's translation.) Anandagiri appears to explain "My birth is not real as it may appear to the ignorant world". T. C. sums up Śrī Śaṅkara as taking 'prakṛti' to mean that which is made up of the three *guṇas* and 'māyā' to indicate unreality.

170 'Prakṛti' is glossed as 'svabhāva' which is explained by T. C. as form or body.

all actions, is all desires, is all sweet odours, is all tastes (whose form is like that of a safflower in safflower" (Bṛh Up 3 6)

'*Ātma-māyā*' means "by the *māyā* which belongs to My own self" Here the word, '*māyā*', is synonymous with 'knowledge' as stated in (the Vedic lexicon) "*Māyā* is wisdom, knowledge" <sup>172</sup> So also there is the usage of authoritative writers, as in "He ever knows the good and evil of beings by his *māyā* (wisdom)" <sup>173</sup> Hence, "by My own knowledge" has the meaning "by My will" Therefore, without giving up all those characteristic attributes which pertain to Lord of all, such as being devoid of sins and such other traits which include within themselves all auspicious qualities, and making My own form of similar configuration with those of gods, men, etc., I am born in the form of gods etc. This *śruti* text, "He who is not subject to birth is born in various forms" (Taitt. Ār III 12 7), teaches the same thing. The purport is that, without making His birth similar to that of other beings, He is born in the form of gods etc. by His own free will in the manner described <sup>173</sup>

Thus there is no inconsistency between what has been already taught (in the *Gītā*) and what will be taught hereafter, as may be made out from the statements "Many births of Mine have passed away, O Arjuna, as well as (many of) yours. I know them all" (IV 5), "I then create Myself" (IV 7), and "He who thus knows truly My divine birth and work" (IV 9)

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

7 For whenever there is decline of *dharma*, and rise of *adharma*, O *Bhārata* (Arjuna), then I create Myself

There is no restriction as to the time of Our birth. For whenever there is decline of *dharma*, of that which ought to be done, as determined by the arrangement of the four castes and four stages of life,

171 This passage is explained at length in *Śrībhāṣya* (I 2 2)

172 *Nirukta* (III 9) enumerates *māyā* and *vaiśvānam* among the equivalents of *prajñā*

173 '*Māyā*' cannot meannescience here because birth here is not an illusory appearance, He who is seized by *Māyā* cannot be omniscient, and creation cannot be spoken of what is unreal, moreover, what is born of the three *guṇas* cannot be divine. (T C)

and taught in the *Vedas*, and whenever there is the rise of its opposite, *adharmā*, then I Myself by My own will and in the manner described, create Myself

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) mentions the purpose of (His) birth

परित्राणाय साधूना विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८ ॥

8 For the protection of the good, and also for the destruction of the evil-doers, for the firm establishment of *dharma*, I am born from age to age

The good are those who are devoted to *dharma*, as defined above. They are the foremost among the *Vasūnavas*, and are bent on taking refuge with Me. While My name, work and form lie beyond the range of speech and mind, they do not gain support, sustenance etc for themselves without seeing Me,<sup>174</sup> and consider even a moment of time (spent away from Me) as a thousand *kalpas*. As they will become weak and unnerved in every limb (on account of separation from Me) I am born from age to age in the forms of gods, men etc, for protecting them by giving them opportunities of seeing, talking about and doing similar things in regard to My body and My activities (I am born) also for the destruction of those who are the opposite of these<sup>175</sup> and for the firm establishment, when in decline, of the Vedic *dharma*, which is of the nature of worship of Myself, by showing My form which is adorable.<sup>176</sup> The meaning is that there is no specific restriction of (the purport of) 'yugas' to *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, etc

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेव यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ ९ ॥

9 He who really knows thus My divine birth and work does not obtain rebirth after giving up the body. He reaches Me, O Arjuna!

174. The 'good' here are not novices in the path of devotion. Nor are they *yogins* in the penultimate stage of *yoga* when vision is about to be but has not yet been attained. They seem to be those whose vision is interrupted, who suffer from something like 'the dark night of the soul'.

175. Commenting on this verse in the *Śrībhāṣya* (I. 1 21), Śrī Rāmānuja observes. "Indeed, the good (here) are the worshippers. The principal object of accomplishment is nothing other than their protection. But the destruction of evil-doers is of secondary importance, because that is possible (to Him) even by merely willing it."

176. The special purpose of incarnation is fostering devotion to the Lord by His showing His adorable form. (T. C.)



He who knows really the life and work of Myself to be intended solely for protecting the good and making them take refuge in Me, and to be divine, i.e., supernatural, and peculiarly Mine, (of Myself) who am free from the birth which is due to *karma* and is characterised by contact with the *prakṛti* made of the undesirable three *gunas*, and who am endowed with all auspicious qualities such as lordship over all, omniscience, capacity to will the truth etc.—such a person (who knows really My life and work), after giving up the present body, does not get rebirth, but obtains Me only. Through knowledge of the truth about My divine birth and work, all the sins that stand in the way of his resorting to Me are destroyed. In this birth alone, he takes refuge in Me in the manner already stated, and having Me only as the object of affection and thinking only of Me, obtains Me alone.<sup>177</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says (again) the same thing

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिता ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १० ॥

10 Freed from desire, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, many, purified by the austerity of knowledge, have obtained My state.<sup>178</sup>

Purified by the austerity called the knowledge of the truth relating to My life and work, many have become thus (i.e., as described in the stanza above). To the same effect is the *śruti*. “The *dhīras* know well the cause of His birth” (*Taitt Ār* III 13 1) ‘The *dhīras*’ are those who are the foremost among the wise—thus they know the manner of His birth.<sup>179</sup> Such is the meaning

177 The knowledge relating to divine incarnation, when combined with loving meditation on God, helps in winning salvation quickly. One who practises meditation without such knowledge will have to wait till all the births required by his *prārabdha-karma* are undergone.

178 This verse has to be understood in the light of the commentary on the previous verse. Hence ‘*man mayāḥ*’ has to be taken as those who think primarily of the Lord. *T C* points out that the *mayā* affix here signifies abundance (Śrī Śaṅkara interprets the word as referring to the knowers of the *Brahman* who realise the identity between themselves and the Lord). ‘*Madbhava*’ has to be understood as the enfranchised condition of the soul, in which many characteristics of the Lord such as freedom from sin are obtained. Compare XIV 2.

179 *T C* notices a reading, ‘*dhīmatām agresarā eva*’ (instead of ‘*evam*’). It would mean that none but the foremost among the wise could understand the mystery of the divine incarnation.

ये यथा मा प्रपद्यन्ते तास्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

मम वर्तमानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥

11 Whoever take refuge in Me howsoever, even so do I favour them  
O Arjuna (Pārtha) men experience My form in all ways

Not merely do I bestow protection on those who wish to seek refuge in Me by incarnating in the forms of gods, men etc. But also, whoever, desirous of taking refuge in Me, 'howsoever', in whatever manner, conceiving of Me in accordance with their own desires, take refuge in Me, that is, resort to Me. I render them favour 'even so', that is, in the manner desired by them. (The meaning is that) I show Myself (to them). Why say more here! All men are desirous of following Me. They keep on experiencing, with their own eyes and other organs of sense in all ways, that is, in every manner desired by them, My form (*partman*), that is, all My essential character, even though it is beyond the range of speech and thought of the *yogins*.<sup>180</sup>

Now, after finishing the topic (relating to divine incarnation), incidentally brought up (by Arjuna's question in IV 4)<sup>181</sup> and in order to teach the manner in which there arises to *karma-yoga* the form of *jñāna*. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak of the difficulty of finding persons who are qualified for such a kind of *karma-yoga*.

180 The second line of IV 11 is identical with the second line of III 23. There it has been rendered as '... men will follow My path, O son of Pithā (Arjuna), in every respect'. The context there makes clear that the reference is to the course of conduct of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as an example to others. Here, however Śrī Rāmañuja feels the context to be different. The *bhajana* of worshippers by the Lord mentioned in the first line can only be His graciously making it easy for them to see Him. In the circumstances, therefore, '*partman*' in the second line cannot mean 'path' or even 'course of conduct'. Figuratively it has to refer to '*svabhāva*', which includes here the Lord's own distinctive form, His activities, His easy accessibility, etc. The experiencing of the form of the Lord in various ways refers not merely to different types of relationship with His incarnation as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It comprehends also the worship of God in images. His transcendent form becomes perceptible there for the benefit of His worshippers (*T' C'*). Śrī Śaṅkara takes the stanza to teach that the Lord bestows His grace on men by granting them the things they desire, in accordance with the ways by which and the motives with which they seek Him. Ānandagiri explains that, whether it be for selfish ends or for emancipation, every one follows the path of the Lord—the path of *karma* or that of *jñāna*.

181 *T' C'* explains at length how the doubts behind Arjuna's question in IV 4 have been met. The Lord takes up the body in incarnation, not out of compulsion, but because of His own desire and as sport. It is supernatural and free from the blemishes of matter. The purpose of incarnation is 'to protect' the good and protection involves showing them His form. All this has scriptural sanction. On the basis of the foregoing, the syllogisms given in Note 168 can be shown to be fallacious.

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणा सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवता ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ १२ ॥

*12 They sacrifice here to the gods, wishing to get the fruits of their religious rites For in this world of men, success soon ensues from religious rites*

All men indeed, desiring the fruition of their religious rites, sacrifice, to, that is, worship Indra and other gods only But no one, giving up attachment to fruits worships Me, who am the soul of India and of other gods, and the enjoyer of all sacrifices Why is this so? Because in this world of men there arise very soon from the performance of religious rites such fruits as sons, cattle, food etc The phrase, "the world of men", is intended to be indicative of *Svarga* and other such worlds also All worldly men lack discrimination, because their endless accumulations of sins, accruing from beginningless time, are not exhausted They expect quick results and perform only those rituals which consist of the worship of Indra and other gods for the sake of sons, cattle, food and such things and for the sake of *Svarga* and such (worlds of enjoyment) But none with his heart distressed with the circuit of births and deaths and aspiring for final release undertakes *karma-yoga* of the kind already described which constitutes worship offered to Me

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa then) mentions the cause<sup>182</sup> which leads to the destruction of the sins hindering the undertaking of *karma-yoga* in the manner described

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मा विद्वद्यकर्ताग्नमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

*13 The system of four castes was created by Me according to the divisions of gunas and activities (in consonance therewith) Know Me to be its maker and also to be one who is not its maker and is immutable*

<sup>182</sup> If most men hanker after trivial objectives to be obtained from the worship of minor divinities, that is because of their temperament and work, as determined by their previous *karma* One gets qualified for *karma yoga* on understanding this, and also that even the fruit of the worship of minor divinities is given by God Himself through them (T C)

The whole universe beginning with *Brahmā* (the four-faced creator) and ending with a clump of grass, with the system of four castes as a principal feature, was created by Me, divided according to the division of *sattva* and other *gunas* and according to activities like self-control in accordance therewith. The mention of 'creation' is for purposes of illustration. (It is intended also to indicate that the universe) is protected by Me alone and is destroyed by Me alone. Know Me to be the agent of the manifold activity of creation and other similar activities (i.e., protection and destruction) and at the same time one who is not the maker thereof<sup>183</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa then) proceeds to point out here how this is so

न मा कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

इति मा योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥ १४ ॥

14 Works do not cling to Me in Me there is no desire for the fruits of works, whoever makes Me out to be such, he is not bound by karma

These acts of differentiated creation etc. do not cling to Me : that is, are not connected with Me. The meaning is that the varieties in the forms of gods, men etc. are not due to Me, but to the particular *karmas*, in the form of merit and demerit, of those who are created. Because of this, I am not the author of differentiated creation etc. through discrimination of what has been acquired from what has not been acquired<sup>184</sup>. And because the created souls (i.e., the souls in the state of creation) are endowed with organs and bodies by creation, and experience, in conformity with their own *karmas* arising from attachment to fruits and such other causes, all enjoyments made

183. The four castes are conceived of as being differentiated by differences in the proportions of the *gunas* of the *prakṛti*. These in turn lead to different kinds of work for the different castes, as enumerated later in Chapter XVIII. The division into castes is illustrative of inequalities in creation, and to answer the charge of partiality and cruelty against God, the basis of unequal creation is here set out. (T. C.)

184. The reference is to the discriminatory judgment of God as seen in the apportionment in creation of happiness and misery as following from virtue and sin. But as God has no partiality, He is not the real cause of the differences. (T. C.)

available by creation, therefore for them alone there is desire for the fruits of creation and other acts, and for the fruits of their *karmas* For Me, there is no (such) desire

To the same effect says the author of the (*Vedānta*) *Sūtras* "There is no partiality or mercilessness (in the *Brahman*) because it (i.e., creation) is dependent (for its inequalities on the *karmas* of the souls)" (II 1 34) So also the venerable Parāśara (says) "He (i.e. the *Brahman*) is only the instrumental (or unimportant) cause of those to be created in the act of creation, in respect of which the principal causes are the various powers (i.e., *karmas*) belonging to those to be created Leaving aside the merely unimportant cause, it (i.e., the thing to be created) does not require the help of any thing else (to get into the state of creation) A (created) thing reaches its appropriate condition (in creation), O (Maitreya, the) best of ascetics, through its own potentiality" (*V P* I 4 51-52) This Supreme Person is merely a (nominal) cause in respect of the creation of those who are to be created, that is, the souls in the bodies of gods etc The principal cause for the differentiation into gods etc is the forces<sup>185</sup> in the form of the previous *karmas* of the souls of those to be created Hence, leaving aside what is merely the unimportant cause, that is, leaving aside the Supreme Person as the maker of creation, the thing which is the knower of the body (i.e., the soul) does not need anything else for differentiation into the conditions of gods etc For it (i.e., the soul) is led to take the forms of gods etc by the force of the long-continuing *karma* with which it is associated Such is the purport<sup>186</sup>

He who knows Me thus to be the maker of creation etc., and at the same time one who is not their maker, that is, one who is free from the desire for the fruits of creation and similar activities, such a person is not bound by, that is, is freed from the ancient *karmas* which hinder the practice of *karma-yoga* and give rise to attachment to fruits etc Such is the meaning

185 The word 'Śakti' has for one of its meanings *karma* in *V P* (VI 7 61) (*T C*)

186 Under *S B* (II. 1 34) these verses from the *V P* are quoted There the *Srutaprabhāṣika* explains that the *Brahman* is the unimportant cause in the sense that He is the general cause The particular causes for the inequalities in creation are the *karmas* of individual souls The analogy is given of water helping different seeds to grow into different plants

एव ज्ञात्वा कृत कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वं पूर्वतर कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥

*15 Knowing (Me), in this manner, even ancient aspirants after deliverance did work Therefore, do you perform work alone, which was done by the ancients of old*

Work of the kind described above was done even by ancient aspirants after deliverance who had become free from sins after knowing Me in this manner Therefore, do you, after having your sins removed by knowledge about Me in the manner stated above, perform the work, which was done by the ancients, that is, by Vivasvat, Manu and others, which is very old, that is, which belongs to former times<sup>187</sup> and was taught by Me even then, and whose form is to be hereafter described (by Me)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) speaks of the difficulty of knowing the *karma* which is to be taught hereafter

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिता ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

*16 Even the sages get bewildered in the matter of determining what action is and what non-action is I shall teach you that (kind of) action by knowing which you will be freed from evil*

What is the nature of the action which should be performed by the seeker after *mokṣa*? And what is non-action (*akarma*)? Knowledge about the truth of the self of the agent of the action is spoken of as non-action The sages, that is, even the learned scholars, are bewildered<sup>188</sup> about, that is, do not truly know, both these—what is the nature of the work that is to be performed, and what is the nature of the knowledge in it Whatever action has in this manner knowledge included in it, I shall teach you that Knowing, that is, performing it,

<sup>187</sup> 'Pārvalaram' is interpreted not as an adverb, but as an adjective of *karma* and hence Śrī Kṛṣṇa indicates that His teaching belongs to an immemorial tradition (T C)

<sup>188</sup> Bewildered, that is, through studying different views in the *śāstras* Bewilderment includes lack of knowledge as well as mistaken views. (T C)

you will be freed from evil, that is, from the bonds of *samsāra*. Knowledge about the work to be done results in its performance.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here teaches whence the difficulty (arises) of understanding this (*karma* or action).

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गति ॥ १७ ॥

17 For there is in action an element which has to be understood, as also an element to be known in varied action. And there is what ought to be known in non-action. Inexplicable is the way of action.

There is an element which ought to be known in action which constitutes the means for the attainment of *mokṣa*. So also in varied action (*vikarma*). That action is varied action which has attained diversity by (getting divided into) the obligatory, occasional and optional kinds and by (assuming) the forms of gathering the materials requisite therefore and such activities. In non-action, that is, in knowledge also there is what ought to be known. Hence inexplicable, difficult to know, is the way of action of the seeker after *mokṣa*.<sup>189</sup>

What ought to be known with reference to varied action is that the diversity created by distinctions of fruits in respect of obligatory, occasional and optional rituals, gathering materials for them and similar activities, should be given up, and the *sūtras* regarded as having a singleness of purpose in aiming at the sole fruit of *mokṣa*. Since this (teaching) has been given in connection with the statement, "That disposition of mind which is characterised by determination is single" (II 41), it has not been explained here at length.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) mentions what ought to be known in respect of action and non-action.

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

189 Śrī Sāṅkara and Śrī Mādhva interpret '*vikarma*' as forbidden action and '*akarma*' as inaction. This interpretation is criticised by T. C. as being in conflict with the concluding statement in the verse that the way of *karma* is mysterious.

18. *He who can see non-action in action and also action in non-action, he is wise among men. He is worthy and has fulfilled all work* <sup>190</sup>

Here, by the, word "non-action", the knowledge of the self which is different from action and which is the subject under discussion, is meant. What is stated by saying, "he who can see knowledge of the self even while work is being done," and "he who can see action while engaging in non-action, that is, the knowledge of the self"? What is taught there is (that they mean respectively) "he who can see, through the constant meditation on the truth about the self, the work itself that is being done to be of the form of knowledge", and "he who can see this knowledge, on account of its being included in *karma-yoga*, to be of the form of *karma*". Both these (i.e., action being qualified by knowledge and knowledge being qualified by action) are brought about by meditation, while work is done, on the true nature of the self who has become the agent (of the work). Thus, he who can see the action which contains within itself the constant meditation on the reality of the self, he is wise, that is, he knows the entire meaning of the *sāstras*. Among men, he is worthy, that is, fit to attain *mokṣa*. And he alone has carried out all work, that is, fulfilled the entire purpose of the *sāstras*.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here explains how the form of knowledge is attained by work which is actually being done.

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भा कामसकल्पवर्जिता ।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डित बुधा ॥ १९ ॥

19. *He all of whose undertakings are free from desire (for fruits) and a delusive identification (of the body with the self), whose karma has been burnt up by the fire of knowledge, him the wise describe as a rational and discriminating sage*

190 In a long commentary on this verse, Śrī Śaṅkara says that seeing non-action (or rather inaction) in action means the realisation that action belongs to the body and not to the Supreme *Ātman*. Seeing action in non-action means the realisation that non-action, like action, is attributed falsely to the Supreme Self, when one feels happy at the cessation of the activities of the body or the mind. According to Śrī Madhva, this verse teaches that the Lord is the real agent of all actions attributed to the individual self. And even when the individual self is inactive as during sleep, the Lord is incessantly carrying on His activities.



In respect of an aspirant after *mokṣa*, all undertakings of actions in the form of obligatory, occasional and optional rites, accomplished through the gathering of the materials therefor and such other secular pursuits, are free from desire in the sense that they are free from attachment to results. They are also free from a delusive identification.<sup>191</sup> That conception of the mind which looks upon one's self as the same as the *prakṛti* and its *guṇas* is a delusive identification (Actions free therefrom) are free from it by being constantly associated with meditation on the real nature of the self as different from the *prakṛti*. Those who know the truth call him (i.e. the aspirant after *mokṣa*) who does work in this way and whose previous *karmas* have become burnt up by the fire of that knowledge which is about the real nature of the self and which is included in action, a rational and discriminating sage. Thus the character of having the form of knowledge arises to action.

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥ २० ॥

20. Even though intently engaged in action, he does nothing at all, who, renouncing attachment to the fruits of action, is contented with the eternal (self) and is without a sense of dependence (on anything else)

Whoever carries out actions, renouncing attachment to the fruits of actions and contented with the eternal, that is, contented with his own self, and without a sense of dependence, that is, free from the sense of dependence on the impermanent *prakṛti* such a person, even though engaged whole-heartedly in work, does no work at all. The meaning is that he is engaged in the practice of knowledge under the pretext of work.<sup>192</sup>

Again, the character of *karma* as having the form of knowledge is examined

191 Śrī Śaṅkara interprets *kāma-saṅkalpa-varyūtāḥ* as those free from desires and the acts of volition they give rise to. T. C. explains the meaning of 'saṅkalpa' thus 'Saṅ' indicates identification, 'kalpa' is delusive knowledge.

192. This means that *karma-yoga* is directing the activities of the senses on to things favourable for the realisation of the knowledge of the self (T. C.)

निराशीर्बतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

शारीरं केवल कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 Free of desire, with intellect and *manas* under control (*yatachittātma*) and having given up all possession, one does not incur sin by doing bodily work

“Free of desire” means having no attachment to the fruits (of action) “*Yatachittātman*” is one whose intellect and *manas* are under control One who has given up all possessions is one who, because of his having the self as his sole aim, is free from the sense of ownership in regard to the *prakṛti* and anything derived from the *prakṛti* One (who is characterised by these qualities and) who performs mere bodily work alone,<sup>193</sup> as long as he lives, does not incur sin, that is, does not get entangled in *samsāra* The meaning is that he sees the self by pure *karma-yoga* of this kind without the intervention of the discipline of knowledge (or *jñāna-yoga*)

यदृच्छालाभसतुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सर ।

समस्तिद्धावमिद्धौ च कृत्वाऽपि न निबध्यते ॥ २२ ॥

22 Being satisfied with whatever is obtained by chance rising above the pairs of opposites free from hostile feelings towards others, remaining the same in success and failure, he is not bound even after having done (work)

Being satisfied with whatever is obtained by chance (i.e., without deliberate effort) for sustaining the body; rising above the pairs of opposites, that is, bearing with the unavoidable cold and heat and similar things (i.e., similar pairs of opposites) until the means (of *karma-yoga*) is gone through completely, free from hostile feelings, that is, being devoid of hostile feelings towards others by looking at his own *karma* as the cause of the occurrence of what is disliked, remaining the same in success and failure, that is remaining in the same state of mind with reference to success like triumph in war and such

193. That is, work which embodied persons cannot easily give up, or work which is connected with the body in the sense that it is free from such psychological accompaniments as desire for fruits, or work which is required for the sustenance of the body (T. C.)

things and failures (therein), one is not bound, that is, does not get into *samsāra*, even after having done work (i.e., *karma-yoga*) only and even without the discipline of knowledge <sup>194</sup>

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरत कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ २३ ॥

23 In the case of one whose attachments are gone, who is liberated (from all idea of owning property), whose mind is established in knowledge (relating to the self) and who works for the sake of the sacrifice, his *karma* is wholly destroyed

In the case of a man whose attachment to all other objects is gone by reason of his mind being established in the knowledge of the self, who is hence freed from all (sense of owning) possessions <sup>195</sup> and who is engaged in the fulfilment of sacrifices and other works as described earlier—his old *karma*, which forms the cause of (his) bondage is wholly destroyed, that is, perishes without leaving any trace <sup>196</sup>

Hitherto the character of *karma* (i.e., action or ritual) as having the form of knowledge has been taught as arising from constant meditation on the nature of the self as distinct from the *prakṛti*. But now He (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches that all action, together with its requisites, has the form of knowledge on account of constant meditation (by the agent) on the Supreme Person who is the Supreme *Brahman* as being its soul

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्माणा हुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ २४ ॥

24 By the Brahman is the oblation of the Brahman which has the Brahman for its instrument offered into the fire of the Brahman. By him who meditates on the Brahman as (the soul of) work, the Brahman alone is to be obtained

194. The discipline of knowledge is that described in Chapter II which is independent and has to be preceded by *karma-yoga* (T C)

195 Śrī Śankara understands by 'mukta' one who is freed from the dualism of *dharma* and *adharma*

196 Śrī Śankara interprets "perishes with its fruits" 'Agra' is taken to mean 'fruits or results'.

What has been spoken of as '*Brahmārpanam*'<sup>197</sup> (rendered as 'which has the *Brahman* for its instrument') forms an adjective to the oblation '*Arpana*' means that by which an offering is given, such as the ladle etc. It is the *Brahman* because of its being the effect of the *Brahman*.<sup>198</sup> '*Brahmārpanam*' is that oblation of which the instrument is the *Brahman*. The *Brahman* is the oblation. The oblation of which the instrument is the *Brahman* also forms by itself the *Brahman*. It is offered by the *Brahman* as the agent into the fire of the *Brahman*, that is, into the fire which is the *Brahman*. He is *Brahma-karma-samādhi* who meditates in this way on all work as being made up of the *Brahman* on account of its having the *Brahman* for its soul. By him who meditates on the *Brahman* as (the soul of work), the *Brahman* alone is to be attained. That is, the true nature of the individual self, which is the *Brahman* on account of its having the *Brahman* for its self, is to be realised.

All work that is being done by the aspirant for *mokṣa* is of the form of knowledge, because it is associated with meditation on its having the Supreme *Brahman* for its soul. It is direct means for seeing the self, and not through the interposition of the discipline of knowledge. Such is the meaning.

He (i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa), after explaining how *karma* has the form of knowledge, proceeds to speak of the varieties of *karma-yoga*.

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञ योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञ यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥ २५ ॥

25 Some yogins resort only to the sacrifice relating to the gods. Others offer sacrifice into the fire of the *Brahman* by means only of (the usual paraphernalia of) the sacrifice.

Some *karma-yogins* resort to the sacrifice relating to the gods, that is, the sacrifice which is of the form of worshipping the gods. The meaning is that they may show firm devotion there alone. Others offer sacrifice into the fire of the *Brahman* by means only of the sacrifice.

197. This is here taken as a single compound word, Śrī Śaṅkara regards '*Brahma*' and '*arpanam*' as two words in apposition, meaning that the *Brahman* is the ladle. The whole verse is interpreted in the sense that things other than the *Brahman* are unreal.

198. This is so because the *Brahman* is the material cause of the universe.

Here the word, 'sacrifice', is used in the senses of the oblation (which in the accusative case) and of the ladle and other means required for performing a sacrifice (when in the instrumental case). In accordance with the maxim, "The oblation of the *Brahman* has the *Brahman* for its instrument" (IV 24), these are devoted to the sacrifice and to the offering of oblations into the sacred fire <sup>199</sup>

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाभ्यन्ये सयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्ये इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ २६ ॥

26 Others offer as oblations the ear and other senses in the fire of self-restraint. Yet others offer as oblations the objects of the senses like sound etc. into the fires of the senses.

Others strive towards the restraint of the senses like the ear etc. Other *yogins* strive to prevent the addiction of the senses to sound and such other objects of the senses <sup>200</sup>

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।

आत्मसयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥ २७ ॥

27 Others offer as oblation all the activities of the senses and the activity of the vital breaths into the fire of the *yoga* of the restraint of the mind, which is kindled by knowledge.

Others offer as oblations all the activities of the senses and the activities of the vital breaths (*prāṇas*) into the fire of the *yoga* of the

199. Śrī Śaṅkara interprets the first line of the verse as referring to those who follow the *pravṛtti-dharma* and the second line as referring to those who follow the *niṣṛṇṇ-mārga*. In the latter case the sacrifice is metaphorical, and refers really to the realisation of the identity of the individual self, here referred to as *yajñā*, with the Supreme *Īśman*.

200. The restraint of the senses, *T' C* explains, is keeping them away from their objects. The offering of the objects of the senses as oblations into the fires of the senses is to make them disregard their objects as of little importance even when they are near. This amounts practically to making the senses abstain completely from contact with forbidden objects and free from undue attachment to those not opposed to the practice of righteousness. Compare Prof M. Ranga-charya: "To make the sensations become extinct in the senses themselves, so as not to allow the mind to be touched and tempted by them into the longing love of pleasure and the hateful abhorrence of pain is the main aim of this discipline of self-control" (*L G I*, p. 411).

restraint of the mind which is kindled by knowledge. The meaning is that they strive to prevent the mind from getting addicted to the activities of the senses and the vital breaths.<sup>201</sup>

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथाऽपरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः सशितव्रता ॥ २८ ॥

28 Self-controlled and of accomplished vows, there are those who perform the sacrifice of material objects, those who perform the sacrifice of austerity, similarly others who perform the sacrifice of union (with sacred places and shrines), those who perform the sacrifice of studying the scriptures and those who perform the sacrifice of knowledge (of the meaning of the scriptures)

Some *karma-yogins* are performers of the sacrifice of material objects. Some engage themselves in worshipping the gods after earning material objects justly. Some engage themselves in making gifts, some in sacrifices, some in making oblations into the sacred fire. All these are performers of the sacrifice of material objects. Some perform the sacrifice of austerity. They devote themselves to *krochra*, *cāndrāyana*,<sup>202</sup> fasts and similar things. Others perform the sacrifice of union. They devote themselves to reaching sacred waters and sacred places. Here the word '*yoga*', as the context is about the divisions of the discipline of *karma*, relates to it.<sup>203</sup> Some others are devoted to the repeated study of the scriptures. Some others are devoted to learning their meaning. They are (all) *yatayah*, devoted to the practice of self-restraint, and of accomplished vows, that is, men of firm resolve.

अपाने जुह्वति प्राण प्राणेष्वपान तथाऽपरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणा. ॥ २९ ॥

201 Here the "kindling knowledge" is meditation on the true nature of the self (T. C.) In this stanza, the reference is to control of the mind, which may retain a longing for the pleasures of the senses even when one is trying to get over them. Cf. III 42.

202 The penance of *krochra* involves regulated fasting. *Cāndrāyana* requires a gradual diminution of food during the waning moon and similarly gradual increase in food during the waxing moon.

203 According to G. S. (23), *karma yoga* includes resorting to austerities, sacred waters, gifts and sacrifices.

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

29-30 *Others of regulated diet are devoted to the control of breath. They (i e., some of them) sacrifice the ingoing breath in (the fire of) the outgoing breath. Similarly, others sacrifice the outgoing breath in the ingoing breath. Some others, obstructing the course of both inhalation and exhalation, sacrifice the ingoing breaths in the ingoing breaths* ..

Other *karma-yogins* are devoted to the practices of restraining the breath. And these (practices) are of three kinds on account of the distinctions based on inhalation, exhalation and stopping the breath. Inhalation is referred to by the statement that some sacrifice the ingoing breath in the outgoing breath. Exhalation is referred to by the statement that (some sacrifice) the outgoing breath in the ingoing breath. Stoppage of breath is referred to by the statement that some, obstructing the course of both inhalation and exhalation, sacrifice the ingoing breaths in the ingoing breaths<sup>204</sup>. The clause 'of regulated diet', applies to all the three kinds of persons devoted to the control of breath.

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषा ॥ ३० ॥

30 *All these are knowers of sacrifices. Their sins are destroyed by sacrifices.*

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

31 *They eat the ambrosia which consists of the remnants of sacrifices and reach the eternal Brahman.*

All these are engaged in performing what is to their liking among the various types of *karma-yoga* from the sacrifice of material objects.

204 *Pūraka* (inhalation) is a *yogic* exercise in which the lungs are filled with as much air as possible by a prolonged act of inspiration. *Recaka* (exhalation) is another exercise in which the lungs are emptied of as much air as possible by a prolonged act of expiration. *Kumbhaka* (stoppage of breath) is the retention of breath as long as possible after performing successively a *recaka* and a *pūraka*. It may be noted that Śrī Madhva is of opinion that only *kumbhaka* is taught here, *recaka* and *pūraka* being accessories thereto. Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that by the sacrifice of the *prāṇas* in the *prāṇas* the control of each of the five vital airs is meant. Śrī Madhva interprets this as the mortification of the *prāṇas* and through them of the senses, by fasting and regulated diet.

to the control of the breath. They are knowers of, that is, are devoted to sacrifices consisting of obligatory and occasional rites preceded by (the performance of) the (five) 'great sacrifices' as taught in "Having created the creatures along with the sacrifices" (III 10) Because of this only, their sins are destroyed. Carrying on the sustenance of their bodies only through the ambrosia of the remains of sacrifices and engaged in the practice of *karma-yoga*, they go to the eternal *Brahman* <sup>205</sup>

नाय लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्य कुत्सतम ॥ ३१ ॥

31 *This world is not for him who offers no sacrifices, O best of the Kurus (Arjuna)! How can the other (world) (be for him)?*

'For him who offers no sacrifices', that is, for him who does not perform the obligatory and occasional rites, preceded by the performance of the (five) 'great sacrifices' etc.—(for such a person) this world is not that is, this material world is not. The objective of human pursuit which is connected with the material world and is known by the names of virtue, wealth and desire, is not successfully attained (by him). How then can the objective of human pursuit which is known as *mokṣa* and which is other than this, be attained successfully? As *mokṣa* has been mentioned as the supreme objective of human pursuit, human objectives different from it are designated as 'this world'. That is, indeed, the material world (because such objectives can be attained only by the embodied self in this world)

एव बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुने ।

कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानिवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ ३२ ॥

32 *Thus, various kinds of sacrifices have been spread out as the means for (the attainment of) the brahman. Know all of them as based on (daily) rituals. Knowing thus, you will become liberated.*

Thus, indeed, many kinds of *karma-yoga* are spread out as the means for the attainment of the *brahman*. That is, they stand as

205. Going to the eternal *Brahman* means here the same thing as under verse 24, where it has been explained as realising the true nature of the individual self which is the *Brahman* in the sense that it has the *Brahman* for its self. Śrī Śaṅkara says that those referred to in this verse must be understood as reaching the *Brahman* not immediately, but in course of time.



the means for the realisation of the true nature of the individual self<sup>206</sup> Know all these *karma-yogas*, which have been previously defined and previously classified, as based on rituals That is, know them as based on the obligatory and occasional rites which are practised day by day. Knowing thus, performing the rituals in the manner mentioned, you will become liberated

It has been stated that ritual, on account of the inclusion of knowledge in it, is of the form of knowledge He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now proceeds to speak of the primacy of the element of knowledge in such ritual which includes knowledge within itself

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञात् ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।

सर्व कर्माखिल पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

33 The sacrifice of knowledge is superior, O slayer of foes, to the sacrifice of material objects Every rite, as also the totality (of other means), culminates in knowledge, O Arjuna (Pārtha)!

In *karma* (i.e., *karma-yoga*), which has a dual aspect, the element consisting of knowledge is superior to the element consisting of material objects The culmination of all ritual and of everything other than it which is acceptable (i.e., of other means of knowledge) is in knowledge<sup>207</sup> This (knowledge) alone which constitutes the objective of attainment by all the means is pursued as being comprehended in *karma-yoga* And this (knowledge), indeed, being practised, reaches in due course the condition of the (ultimate) goal<sup>208</sup>

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञान ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४ ॥

34 Learn this (knowledge) by prostration, by extensive questioning and by service The wise who see the truth will teach you knowledge

206 T. C. quotes a lexicon as authority for taking 'mukha' in the verse to stand for "the means" The *brahman* here is the individual self Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva understand by it the *Vedas* and the Supreme Self respectively

207 The two terms, 'sarvaṁ' and 'akṣaram', in the verse mean 'all' they are taken to stand for all types of *karma-yoga* and all other means to knowledge of the self

208. That is, it leads to the vision of the self (T. C.). Śrī Madhva comments that culmination in knowledge is leading to knowledge as the fruit Śrī Śaṅkara takes knowledge to be the means to emancipation

'This (knowledge)' is the knowledge relating to the self, which has been taught by Me in the verses beginning with "Know however that to be imperishable" (II 17) and ending with "This which has been said to you so far" (II 39). Therefore, engaged in works suitable thereto, and in proportion to (your) progress (towards fitness to receive it), you will learn from wise men from time to time (this knowledge) which will become of clear form through (your) prostrating to, extensively questioning and serving (such wise teachers)<sup>209</sup>. The wise are those who have had direct vision of the essential nature of the self. Being honoured by you through prostration etc., and discerning the purpose which you, with the desire to become acquainted with (this) knowledge, have in questioning all round the subject, they will teach you (this) knowledge.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) speaks of the characteristic of the knowledge about the nature of the self when it has the form of direct vision

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेव यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ ३५ ॥

35 *Knowing which, O son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna), you will not fall again into delusion in this way and by which you will see all beings without exception in your self and then in Me*

Knowing which knowledge, you will not in this manner again fall into the delusion which consists in mistaking the body and such other objects for the self and which is the basis of selfish attachment etc. created thereby. By means of it, you will see in your self alone all embodied selves (*bhūtāni*) who are connected with such forms as those of gods, men etc., because between you and other beings there is equality when dissociated from the *prakṛti*, on account of (your self and all other selves) being solely of the form of knowledge. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will later on teach that the essential nature of the self, free from the evil of the contact with the *prakṛti*, is everywhere similar, thus "For the *brahman* (or the individual self), when unsullied (or free of contact with the *prakṛti*), is the same everywhere

209 Fitness to realise the nature of the self grows with the destruction of obstructive sins through the practice of *karma yoga*, and as this fitness grows, one should seek and benefit from the help of teachers who have had the vision of the self. (T C)

Therefore, they abide in the *brahman* (i.e., realise its sameness everywhere)" (V 19) And then you will see all beings without exception in Me, because of the similarity of the thing, the self, everywhere in its pure state, with My nature. For He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will say later on "Those who have resorted to this knowledge and attained the same qualities which characterise Me" (XIV 2). Accordingly, the similarity of the self as a thing, when divested of name and form, with the nature of the Supreme may be made out from *śruti* texts like "Then the man of wisdom, shaking off merit (*punya*) and demerit (*pāpa*), and being untainted (by contact with the *prakṛti*), attains the highest degree of equality (i.e., similarity with the *Brahman*)" (*Mund. Up.* III 1 3). Hence, all selves, when free of association with the *prakṛti*, are similar to one another and similar to the Lord of all <sup>210</sup>

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनेनैव वृजिन सतरिष्यसि ॥ ३६ ॥

36 Even if you are the greatest sinner among all those who are sinful, you will completely cross over all sin solely with the help of the boat of knowledge

Even if you are the greatest sinner among all those who are sinful, you will completely cross over the sea which is in the form of all sins previously accumulated, solely with the help of the boat consisting of the knowledge relating to the self

यथैधासि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥ ३७ ॥

37 As a well kindled fire reduces faggots to ashes, the fire of knowledge reduces all karma to ashes

The fire which is in the form of the knowledge relating to the real nature of the self reduces to ashes the collection of endless *karmas*

210 This is in reply to Śrī Śaṅkara's comment that Arjuna is taught in this verse to see the identity between the *keśayā* (the individual self) and *īvara* (the Lord), as established in the *Upamāda*

accumulated from time without beginning, just as a fire which is well stirred up (reduces to ashes) a collection of firewood <sup>211</sup>

न हि ज्ञानेन सर्वं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्ध कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥ ३८ ॥

38 For there is no purifier here equal to knowledge. He who has attained success in karma-yoga finds it (i.e., such knowledge) of his own accord in himself in course of time.

The meaning is that the knowledge of the self destroys all sin, because here, in this world, there is no other thing which is equal to the knowledge of the self as a purifier, as making for purity <sup>212</sup>. One who has succeeded in karma-yoga which is of the form of knowledge and which is practised day by day in the way taught, in course of time, of his own accord attains it—that is, knowledge of that kind—in himself.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains the same very clearly thus :

श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं तत्परस्सयतेन्द्रियम् ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परा शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ३९ ॥

39 He who has ardour, who is devoted to it and who has subdued his senses, obtains knowledge. Not long after getting this knowledge, he attains supreme peace.

In this way, after getting knowledge from instruction, he becomes full of ardour in increasing the knowledge taught. He becomes devoted to it, that is, his mind is fixed there alone. His senses are so controlled as to be kept away from anything other than it. In a short time, he obtains the knowledge which has reached the state of maturity described above. Not long after getting such a kind of knowledge, he attains supreme peace. That is, he obtains supreme bliss <sup>213</sup>.

211. The comparison of accumulated karmas to a sea to be crossed by the boat of knowledge shows their infinite extent and their duration from time immemorial. But as crossing the sea is no guarantee against future lapses, there is the comparison with firewood. Karmas can no longer act after being reduced to ashes.

212 That is, among things other than knowledge of the Lord (T. C.).

213 T. C. compares II 70-72. The supreme peace or supreme bliss mentioned here is that which arises from self-realisation, and not the bliss or peace of final emancipation.

ब्रह्मभ्रष्टाश्चान्धसंशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ ४० ॥

40 *He who is of a doubting self (i.e., mind), being ignorant and lacking ardour, perishes. For him who has a doubting self, there is neither this world, nor the next, nor happiness*

He who is ignorant, that is, devoid of the knowledge thus received through instruction who has no ardour for the means for developing the knowledge taught, that is, who does not make efforts to progress quickly (in such knowledge) and who, in regard to the knowledge imparted to him, has a doubting self, that is, a doubting mind—such a man perishes, that is, is lost. To him who has doubting mind about this knowledge concerning the real nature of the self which has been taught, even this material world does not exist, nor the next world. The meaning is that the ends of human life consisting of virtue, wealth and desire, are not attained. How then can *mokṣa* (be attained)? For in respect of all the ends of human life, their nature is such that they can be successfully attained only by the rites prescribed in the *sūtras*—and the success arising from the rites prescribed in the *sūtras* follows from the certain conviction that the self is distinct from the body. Hence sharing in (even) a bit of happiness does not fall to the lot of the man who has a doubting mind about the self.

योगसन्यस्तकर्माणि ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।

आत्मवन्त न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥ ४१ ॥

41 *Karmas do not bind, O Arjuna (Dhananjaya), one who has given up action through yoga, whose doubts are cut away by knowledge and who is of a firm mind*

Countless *karmas* of the past which form the cause of bondage, do not bind him, who has, through the *yoga* as taught above,<sup>214</sup> given up work,<sup>215</sup> that is, whose work has assumed the form of knowledge who has cut away all doubts in regard to the self by the knowledge of the self as taught above and who is of a firm mind, that is, is attentive, with the mind fixed firmly on the purport of what has been taught.

214. There reference is to the teaching in IV 18 (T. C.)

215 Giving up action here means giving up agency, etc., and not complete renunciation of action (T. C.) The latter meaning is given by Śrī Śaṅkara

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूत हृत्स्थ ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।

द्विद्वेन सशय योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥ ४२ ॥

42 Therefore, cutting off with the sword of the knowledge relating to the self, this doubt, which is caused by ignorance and is established in the heart, practise (*karma-yoga*), O Arjuna (*Bhārata*), and rise up

Therefore, after cutting off, by the sword of the knowledge of the self as taught by Me, the doubt about the self which is born of beginningless ignorance and is established in the heart, practise the *karma-yoga* taught by Me. For that purpose, rise up, O Bhārata. Such is the meaning

## CHAPTER V

In the fourth chapter, the various kinds of *karma-yoga* as arising from its having the form of knowledge and the primacy of the element of knowledge (therein) have been taught. In the third (chapter) itself it has been taught that even for one who is qualified for *jñāna-yoga* *karma-yoga* is more valuable, as it has within itself knowledge of the self, is free from the liability to interruption, is easy to do and is independent (of other things). Now (in the present chapter), it is shown <sup>216</sup> that *karma-yoga* is quicker (in securing results) than the discipline of *jñāna* as a means for the realisation of the self. Then is taught the manner of meditating (on the self) as not being an agent, which is included in *karma-yoga*. This knowledge <sup>217</sup> which has its roots in (i.e. arises from or is caused by) that *karma-yoga* is then investigated.

अर्जुन उवाच—

मन्याम कर्मणा कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शससि ।

यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

I You praise, O Krishna the giving up of works and again (the) *yoga* (of works). Of these, tell me which one is well ascertained to be preferable.

“ You praise the giving up of works, that is, *jñāna-yoga*, and again, *karma-yoga*. ” This is what is said. In the second chapter, You have shown that *karma-yoga* alone should be first practised by the aspirant after *mokṣa* and that the vision of the self should be effected by means of *jñāna-yoga* by one whose mind has its impurities rubbed off by *karma-yoga*. Again, in the third and fourth (chapters), You praise the discipline of *karma* to the effect that the discipline of *karma* is better (than *jñāna-yoga*) even for one who has reached the stage of being qualified for *jñāna-yoga*, and that as a means for the attainment of the self, it is independent of the discipline of *jñāna*.

<sup>216</sup> This summary of Chapter V is based on G. S. (9)

<sup>217</sup> The knowledge referred to here is that arising in the matured state of *karma-yoga*.

There, of these two, *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga*, tell me which alone is well ascertained to be preferable, that is, pre-eminent<sup>218</sup> by reason of ease (in practice) and quickness (in bringing about results in the matter of serving as the means for the realisation of the self)<sup>219</sup>

**श्रीभगवानुवाच—**

संन्यासः कर्मयोगञ्च निश्चेयसकरावुभौ ।

तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात् कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

THE LORD SAID

3 Both renunciation (of works) and *karma-yoga* bring about the highest good But, of these two, *karma-yoga* excels the renunciation of works

Even to one who has the capacity for *jñāna-yoga*, (both) renunciation, that is, *jñāna-yoga*, and *karma-yoga* are independent (of each other), and bring about the highest good But of these two, *karma-yoga*, excels the renunciation of works, that is, *jñāna-yoga*

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here explains whence this is so

ज्ञेयस्स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।

निर्वन्दो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

3 He who neither hates nor desires and is free from (the influence of) the pairs of opposites is to be understood as ever given to renunciation (of works) Hence, O mighty-armed (Arjuna)! he is easily liberated from bondage

That *karma-yogin*<sup>220</sup> who is satisfied with the experience of the self which is included in it (*karma-yoga*), who desires nothing different therefrom, who therefore hates nothing at all, and who, solely on account of this, is capable of enduring patiently the pairs of opposites, he should

218 'ऽरेयस' is glossed as 'ऽरेष्टाश्च' in order to show that it is not an adverb and that it does not mean prosperity or beatitude

219. Śrī Śaṅkara understands the question here to be from one who regards it his duty to pursue either *jñāna* or *karma*, since both cannot be pursued together and there is no injunction to adopt them at different times.

220. The commentary makes it clear that the *nitya-sannyāsī* of this verse should not be taken to be a *jñāna-yogin* Śrī Śaṅkara's view is not different



be regarded as ever given to renunciation, that is, ever devoted to the discipline of knowledge. He is therefore easily liberated from bondage on account of his being devoted to *karma-yoga* which is easy to do.

The independence of *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* from each other in the matter of serving as means for the realisation of the self, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) sets out

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।

एकमप्यास्थितस्सम्यग्भयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥ ४ ॥

1 (*Ignorant*) children declare that *Sāṅkhya* (or *karma-yoga*) and *Yoga* or (*jñāna-yoga*)<sup>221</sup> are different, but not those possessed of true wisdom. He who adopts well even one (of them) obtains the fruit of both.

Those who declare *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* are different on account of difference in results—they are children, that is, persons with imperfect knowledge. They are not those possessed of true wisdom; they do not know the whole truth. The meaning is that they are not possessed of true wisdom who say that *karma-yoga* brings about only *jñāna-yoga*, that *jñāna-yoga* alone brings about the vision of the self and that the two are thus different on account of difference in their fruits. As both have only the vision of the self as the fruit, one who adopts well only one of them, on account of both having the same fruit, obtains that fruit only.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) further explains the same

यत्साध्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं साध्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

5 That goal which is attained by the *Sāṅkhya*,<sup>222</sup> the same is attained the *Yogins* also. He who sees the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Yoga* to be one, he (indeed) sees (truly).

221 As in III 3, the *Sāṅkhyas* and the *Yogins* are understood to be those following *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* respectively. Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'Sāṅkhya' as *sannyāsa* with *jñāna* and 'Yoga' as *karma-yoga* with equanimity of mind and other means to *jñāna*.

222 T. C. notes a reading for the first half of the first line of *Yādvaprakāśa*: 'Sāṅkhyāḥ paśyanti'.

The fruit in the form of the vision of the self which is obtained by the Sāṅkhya, that is, those devoted to the discipline of knowledge, the same (fruit) is obtained also by those who are devoted to *karma-yoga*. The meaning is that he alone is possessed of true wisdom who sees the Sāṅkhya and the Yoga as one on account of their having the same fruit, that is, (sees them) as admitting the choice of either (of them)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) points out the extent of the difference between them <sup>223</sup>

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।

योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ६ ॥

6 Renunciation, however, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), is hard<sup>224</sup> to attain without (the adoption of) Yoga. The meditating sage who has adopted Yoga attains the brahman without delay

Renunciation, that is, *jñāna-yoga*, cannot however, be attained without *yoga*, that is, without *karma-yoga*. He who has adopted *yoga*, that is, one who has taken to *karma-yoga* and who is by himself a sage, that is, given to meditation on the self after going through *karma-yoga* with ease, attains the *brahman*,<sup>225</sup> that is, realises the self, without delay, that is, in a very short time. But one adopting *jñāna-yoga* goes through *jñāna-yoga* with great difficulty. The meaning is that, because it (i.e. *jñāna-yoga*) is difficult to do, he attains the self after a long time

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ ७ ॥

i He who is devoted to yoga, who is pure of self, who has his self completely under control, who has overcome the senses and whose self has become the self of all beings,— even while being engaged in action, he is not soiled

<sup>223</sup> The goal being the same, both the *karma yoga* and the *jñāna yoga* are alternative means thereto. But there is difference between them in regard to ease of performance, quickness in reaching the goal and the suitability of particular individuals therefor (T C)

<sup>224</sup> The use of 'duṣkham' (rendered as 'hard') in neuter may be justified on the analogy of a similar use of 'sakyam' in *Sakyam aṇḍabhiḥ pātum vātāḥ* in Rām (VI. 28. 8) (T C)

<sup>225</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara understands by 'brahman' here 'sannyāsa'.

But he who is devoted to *karma-yoga* remains engaged in the performance of work which is pure (being free from *rajas* and *tamas*) which is prescribed by the *śāstras*, and which is of the form of the worship of the Supreme Person. By this (means), he becomes purified in mind. He has his self completely under control, that is, he has his mind easily subdued on account of his mind being occupied with the work which he has practised <sup>226</sup>. Hence he has overcome the senses.

His self has become the self of all embodied being : that is, on account of his being devoted to meditation on the real nature of the self, who is the agent, his self has become the self of all embodied beings like the gods etc. For to one who meditates on the real nature of the self, the self is of the same form in himself and in the gods and such others. The differences among the gods and others cannot be in respect of the form of the self, as these (differences) are based on particular modifications of the *prakṛti* (i.e., on their bodies). Presently, He (Śrī Kṛpā) will teach. "For the *brahman* (or the individual self), when unsullied or free of contact with the *prakṛti* is the same everywhere" (V 19), which is to the effect that, when separate from the *prakṛti*, it (i.e., the self) is of the same form everywhere in the bodies of the gods etc., on account of its being solely of the form of knowledge. One who has become thus, even while being engaged in action, is not soiled by regarding what is other than the self as the self. He is not at all connected therewith. Hence he attains the self without any delay. Such is the meaning.

As *karma-yoga* is alone better on account of its being easy to do and of its quickness in securing fruits, therefore listen to its requisite.

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।

पश्यञ्छृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रस्नश्च गच्छन् स्वपञ्चसन् ॥ ८ ॥

प्रलपन् विसृजन् गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥ ९ ॥

8 The knower of (the) truth (about the self) who is devoted to yoga should think, "I do not know anything at all," even though he is seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, smelling, breathing

<sup>226</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'vijitātma' as 'vijitadeha', one who has conquered his body.

9. *Talking, discharging, receiving, opening the eyes, or closing the eyes—bearing in mind that the senses operate of themselves in relation to the objects of the senses.*

Thus, he who knows the truth about the self should bear in mind, that is, constantly remember that the ear and other organs of sense, the organ of speech and other organs of action and the vital breaths<sup>227</sup> operate of themselves in relation to their own objects. He should think, "I do nothing". The meaning is that he should think, "To me who am solely of the nature of knowledge, this kind of agency which has been brought about by association with the senses and the vital breaths as a result of *karma*, has not arisen on account of my essential nature"<sup>228</sup>

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ १० ॥

10 *Whoever, having made over (all) works unto the brahman (or the prakṛti) and having given up (all) attachment, performs work, he is not stained by sin, (even) as the lotus leaf is not (wetted) by water*

Here by the word, '*brahman*', the *prakṛti* is mentioned.<sup>229</sup> For later on He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will say "The womb (from which the universe is born) is that great *brahman* of Mine" (XIV 3). While the *prakṛti* remains in the form of the senses, since the senses are particular modifications of the *prakṛti*, whoever, as taught in the passage beginning with "Even though he is seeing, hearing" (V 8), makes over (all) work to the *brahman* (or the *prakṛti*), gives up attachment and engaged himself in (varied) activities, thinking, "I do nothing at all"—such a person, even though he remains in contact with the *prakṛti*, is not stained by the sin which is the cause of bondage and which is of the form of considering the *prakṛti* (or the body) as the self "As

227. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and eating are activities of the organ of sense. Moving, talking, discharging and receiving are the activities of the organs of action. Sleeping, breathing, opening the eyes and closing them are activities of the vital breaths (T C)

228. This has to be distinguished from Śrī Saṅkara's view that true knowledge as in the case of the man who seeks for water in a mirage, leads to cessation from action.

229. Śrī Saṅkara glosses '*Brahman*' as the Lord.

a lotus leaf by water " the meaning is that he is not stained (by *karma*) even as the lotus leaf, though in contact with water, is not stained (or wetted by water).<sup>230</sup>

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।

योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्मशुद्धये ॥ ११ ॥

11 To attain the purification of the self, the yogins, giving up attachment, perform work by means of the body, by means of the mind, by means of the intellect, as also by means of the senses merely

Giving up attachment to *Svarga* and such other fruits, the *yogins* perform such work as can be carried out by the body, the mind, the intellect and the senses, to attain the purification of the self, that is, for destroying the bondage of *karma* which has been acquired of old and which has affected the self (i.e., stood in the way of the realisation of its true nature) Such is the meaning

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।

अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२ ॥

12 He who is devoted (to the quest for self-realisation) gives up the fruits of works and attains enduring peace. One who is not (so) devoted gets attached to the fruits (of works), being impelled by desire, and becomes subject to bondage

He who is devoted (or *yukta*) is one who is free from longing towards fruits other than (the realisation of) the self and is exclusively devoted to the self. Giving up the fruits of works and performing works only with a view to purify the self, he attains enduring peace that is, he attains the bliss which is of the form of the experience of the self and is lasting.<sup>231</sup> One who is not (so) devoted has longing for fruits other

230 This verse is intended to answer the following doubts (i) whether there is no sin in doing actions with desire for fruits and with the feeling that one is not doing anything, (ii) whether there is any use, if one is really the agent, in ascribing the agency to limiting conditions; and (iii) whether contact with the *prakṛti* will not lead one to mistake the body for the soul, even when meditating thus (T C.).

231 Śrī Śaṅkara understands by 'naiṣṭhikī ānti' the peace of *mokṣa*, which arises out of devoted discipline progressing through the stages of purity of mind, attainment of knowledge, renunciation of all works and devotion to knowledge.

than the self. He is disinclined to the vision of the self. Being impelled by desire, he becomes attached to the fruits (of work) and performs works and gets bound for ever by *karmas*. That is, thus he is perpetually in the cycle of births and deaths.

Therefore, what is said is that, devoid of attachment to fruits and attributing works to the *prakṛti* which has evolved into the form of the senses, one should perform works only for the sake of freedom from bondage of the self.

Then, the making over of the agency to the *prakṛti* which has evolved into the form of the body is taught

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।

नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ १३ ॥

13 The embodied self, making over by means of the mind all works to the city of nine gateways and being master of itself, dwells at ease neither doing any thing at all, nor causing (the body) to work.

The embodied self makes over all works to the city of nine gateways<sup>232</sup> with the help of the mind which has judged that the agency of the self in respect of works is due to association with the body as a result of ancient *karmas* and not to its own nature. Being master of itself, it dwells at ease, neither performing action which has its basis in the body, nor causing the body to work.

He (Śrī Kṛishna) proceeds to speak of the natural state of the self as it is actually in itself.

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभु ।

न कर्मफलसंयोग स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४ ॥

14 The master (soul), in relation to the world (of embodied beings), does not give rise to agency, nor to actions, nor to union with the fruits of action. But only the innate tendency operates.

232 This city is the human body, the nine gateways being the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the mouth and the organs of excretion. *Kaṭh Up* (V 1) makes the gateways eleven—probably adding the fontanelle and the navel. *T. C.* thus makes clear the figure. The city is the body, the senses are the citizens, the Lord is its ruler and the individual self is a servant of the Lord.

In respect of this world (of embodied beings) which exists in association with the *prakṛti* in the forms of gods, animals, men and immovable things, the master self who is not subject to *karma* and is established in his own essential nature, does not give rise to, that is, does not produce<sup>233</sup> the agency individual to gods and such other beings, their varied and peculiar activities and their union with fruits in the form of (being born as) gods *etc.*, as a result of these different activities. Who then (gives rise to them)? "But only the innate tendency operates." The innate tendency is the subtle impressions arising from (association with) the *prakṛti*. The meaning is that all this agency and such other things do not arise from the intrinsic nature of the self but are produced by the subtle impressions created by mistaking as the self those (forms of the *prakṛti* like the gods *etc.*), on account of contact with the *prakṛti* in the forms of gods and other beings—contact which has arisen from the flow of previous *karman*s, continuing from time without beginning.

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पाप न चैव सुकृत विभुः ।

अज्ञानेनावृत ज्ञान तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ १५ ॥

15 He (i.e., the master soul) who is not limited to any particular locality of space,<sup>234</sup> does not take away<sup>235</sup> the sin of any one, nor even the good fortune. Knowledge is enveloped by that which is opposed to knowledge. Living beings are deluded by this (enemy of knowledge).

He (the master self) is not limited to any particular locality of space. He is not to be met somewhere only. The bodies of the gods *etc.* do not constitute his particular region. Hence he is not the kinsman of any one, nor the enemy of any one. For this reason, he does not take away, that is, does not remove the evil, that is, the sorrow of any one such as his son who is regarded with affection on account of his being related to him. Nor does he take away, that is, remove the good fortune, that is, the happiness of any one who is regarded inimically.

233 This is intended to rebut the interpretation that 'arjati' here means 'gives up' (T. C.)

234. 'Vibhu', which generally means 'all-pervading', is thus explained here.

235 'Adatte' has been rendered as 'takes away' and not 'seizes'.

All this is produced by unconscious subtle impressions. In the case of one whose essential nature is such, how do these perverted subtle impressions arise? "Knowledge is enveloped by that which is opposed to knowledge." His knowledge is enveloped, that is, contracted by a series of previous *karmas* which are opposed to knowledge—contracted so that he might become fit to experience their own results. By this *karma*, which is in the form of a veil over knowledge, union with the bodies of the gods etc and the delusion which is in the form of mistaking such bodies for the self are produced. In consequence there will arise the unconscious subtle impression of such misapprehensions of the self and the unconscious subtle impression in favour of activities suitable thereto, from these subtle impressions (arise) misapprehension of the self in what is its opposite and the undertaking of works.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now proceeds to bring together in their proper temporal sequence what has been taught before in "You will completely cross over all sin solely with the help of the best of knowledge" (IV. 36), "The fire of knowledge reduces all *karma* to ashes in the same way" (IV. 37), and "For there is no purifier equal to knowledge" (IV. 38).<sup>236</sup>

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।

तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६ ॥

16. *In respect of those in whom this enemy of knowledge has been destroyed by the knowledge of the self, that knowledge, in their case, is supreme<sup>237</sup> and illuminates like the sun*

While all the selves are thus situated, in the case of those selves by whose knowledge, which has the characteristics already mentioned, which arises from the teaching about the real nature of the self, which has the self for its object, which is capable of becoming better and

236. Thus far, the varieties of the meditation on the self not being the agent, mentioned in Chapter III, have been described. Now the particular kind of knowledge referred to in Chapter IV is investigated (T C)

237. 'Parat' , rendered 'supreme', is taken as an adjective qualifying 'knowledge'. Śrī Śaṅkara, however, takes it as a noun in the objective case, meaning 'supreme reality'. This Supreme Reality is conceived as shining in knowledge.



better by daily practice and whose purity cannot be excelled, this enemy of knowledge which conceals this knowledge and which is in the form of the accumulation of countless *karmas* flowing from time immemorial, is destroyed—in the case of these (souls), this knowledge which belongs to their essential nature, which is unlimited and uncontracted, illuminates everything as it is in itself

The plurality of the self on its essential nature is made out from the description of those whose ignorance is lost, as many, in the expression, "in respect of those" What has been understood from the statement, "It is not at all that once I did not exist" (II. 12), at the commencement (of the teaching of Śrī Kṛṣṇa), is stated here with greater clarity. This plurality, moreover, is not due to limiting conditions<sup>238</sup> (imposed on a single universal Self) For there cannot be the slightest trace of limitation in respect of those whose ignorance has been destroyed Knowledge is taught to be an attribute inseparable from the essential nature of the self, because of the difference<sup>239</sup> (between the self and knowledge) pointed out in the statement, "Knowledge, in their case, (illuminates) like the sun." Moreover, by the example of the sun, the position of the knower and knowledge as similar to that of light and the luminous object is indicated.<sup>240</sup> Therefore, indeed, the contraction of knowledge by *karma* in the state of *samsāra* and (its) expansion in the state of *mokṣa* is proper and appropriate

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।

गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्भूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७ ॥

17 Those whose intellects seek it, whose minds think about it, who undergo discipline for its sake and who hold it as their supreme objective, have their sins completely washed away by knowledge and attain that state (of the self) wherefrom there is no coming back again <sup>241</sup>

238 The reference is to the systems of Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Bhāṣaka

239. This is to stress the point that the self even in the pure state is a knower and not mere knowledge (T. C).

240 Śrī Rāmānuja holds that the self, while being knowledge as substance, has also attributive knowledge. Hence the analogy with the sun which is light as substance and also has light as its attribute. See S B I, pp 65-77, and S B. III. pp 116-129.

241. The various stages in the progress of the experience of the true nature of the self are here indicated (T. C.)

Those whose intellects seek it are those who are resolved on securing a vision of the self in that way. Those whose minds think about it are those whose minds have the self for their objects. Those who undergo the discipline for it are those who are devoted to practices for its attainment. Those who hold it as their supreme objective are those who regard it alone as their highest goal. (Such persons), having their previous sins completely washed away by knowledge practised in this way, attain the self as described and as in the state wherefrom there is no coming back again.

The self which is in a state from which no return is possible, that self is said to be one wherefrom there is no coming back again <sup>242</sup>. The meaning is that they attain the self which abides in its own nature.

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८ ॥

18. *The wise see alike in regard to one well endowed with learning and humility, a Brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater (or an outcaste)*

The wise are those who know the real nature of the self. They see alike everywhere in regard to souls which are perceived to be extremely different in form (from one another)—such as one who is well endowed with learning and humility, a mere Brāhmaṇa, <sup>243</sup> a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater and similar beings, because they (all) have the sole form of knowledge. The meaning is that the difference of forms is due to the *prakṛti* and not to the self, and that they see the self as similar everywhere on account of its having the sole form of knowledge.

इहैव तैजितस्सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोष हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिता ॥ १९ ॥

242. Śrī Rāmānuja takes 'apunarūṣṭi' as descriptive of the self as realised, while Śrī Śaṅkara understands thereby cessation of further contact with bodies as what is attained by the ascetics described in this verse.

243. Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'vidyā vinaya-sampanna' as an adjective qualifying 'Brāhmaṇa'. But here it is taken as an independent nominal phrase by itself. T. C. points out that the others referred to have no qualifying adjectives, and as the cow and the elephant and the dog and the dog-eater seem to constitute two pairs, the man of learning and humility and the Brāhmaṇa must form another

19 *Even now creation is conquered by those whose mind is established in equality. For the brahman (or the individual self), when unsullied (or free of contact with the prakṛti), is the same everywhere. Therefore, they abide in the brahman (i.e., realise its sameness everywhere)*

By those whose mind is established in equality in respect of all selves in the manner described—by them, even now, even at the stage of practising the means, creation is conquered, that is, *samsāra* is overcome<sup>244</sup>. For, when unsullied, the *brahman* is the same everywhere. For, indeed, the thing, self, when in a state of freedom from the impurities arising from contact with the *prakṛti*, is the same everywhere as the *brahman*<sup>245</sup>. If they are established in the equality of all selves, they indeed abide in the *brahman*. And abidance in the *brahman* is certainly the conquest of *samsāra*. The meaning is that those who meditate on the equality of all selves, on account of their having the sole form of knowledge, are, indeed, emancipated (from *samsāra*)

The manner of life by observing which the ripening of knowledge in the form of equality of vision comes to one practising *karma-yoga*—that manner of life He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches here

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रिय प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।

स्थिरबुद्धिरसमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थित ॥ २० ॥

20 *He who, having learnt about the brahman (or the individual self), is seeking to abide (lit. is abiding) in the brahman, whose mind is on that (self) which is enduring and who is free from the delusion of identity (with the body)—he should not feel elated on obtaining what is pleasant, nor feel distressed on obtaining what is unpleasant*

Whatever becomes pleasant to one remaining in whatever body and staying in any condition on account of the subtle impressions of previous *karmas*, and whatever becomes unpleasant—after obtaining these two, one should not feel elated and distressed (respectively). How (is this to be achieved)? One must have the mind on that which is enduring. He whose mind is on the enduring self is one whose

244 They have almost attained salvation, and the vision of equality gives them a bliss only a little less than the supreme beatitude

245 The individual self is called the *brahman* here, as in its pure state it is similar to the Supreme *Brahman*

mind is on that which is enduring.<sup>246</sup> One must (also) be free from the delusion of identity. The delusion of identity is the delusion of identifying the enduring self with the impermanent body. One free from it (is here spoken of). And how can (all) this be? He, having learnt about the *brahman* (or the individual self) is abiding in the *brahman*. That is, having become a knower of the *brahman* through instruction (from wise seers), he remains constantly engaged in practices directed towards (attaining) the *brahman*.

What is said is this, One should learn the truth about the self from the teaching of those who know the truth. Striving for realising the same, he gives up esteeming the body as the self and becomes established in the agreeable experience of the vision of the enduring self. Let him not feel elation and distress on meeting with the pleasant and the unpleasant which arise (from the *prakṛti* and are impermanent

ब्राह्मस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यस्तुलम् ।

स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते ॥ २१ ॥

21 He whose mind is not bound by affection to external contacts and finds happiness in the self—(he) has his mind devoted to the attainment of the *brahman* and enjoys undecaying bliss.

He who finds, that is, obtains happiness<sup>247</sup> only in the self within, his mind not being bound by affection in the manner already stated to external contacts, that is, to experiences of objects other than the self—such a person gives up repeated contemplation of the *prakṛti* (i.e., of the agreeableness of sense-objects); has his mind devoted to the attainment of the *brahman*, that is, has his mind constantly engaged in (contemplation of) the *brahman*, and attains the undecaying bliss which is of the form of the experience of the *brahman*.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak of the pleasure arising from the *prakṛti* as well worthy of rejection.

246. Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'sthira-buddhi' as one whose mind is free from doubt.

247. The *sukha* of the first line has to be distinguished from that of the second line. The former refers to the happiness arising from knowledge derived from instruction. It constitutes the beginning of an unending bliss which is mentioned later on and which arises after the experience of the direct vision of the self (T. C.).

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कान्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ २२ ॥

22. For those pleasures which result from contacts (with external objects), they are certainly the sources of pain. They have a beginning and an end, O Arjuna (Kaunteya)! The wise man does not find joy in them.

Those pleasures which result from the contacts of the sense-objects with the senses, they are sources of pain, that is, have pain as their result. They have a beginning and an end; that is, they are indeed perceived to remain only for a brief while. One who knows their real nature<sup>248</sup> does not find joy in them.

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।

कामक्रोधोद्वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३ ॥

23. He who is able, even here, before he is liberated from the body, to withstand the strong impulse springing from desire and anger, he is the fit man (for seeing the self), he is the happy man.

He who is able to withstand, that is, to check the strong impulse springing from desire and anger through his love of the experience of the self, (he who is able to do this) before he is liberated from the body, even here, that is, even during the stage of practising the means—he is the fit man, one suited for the experience of the self. He alone, during the time that succeeds his liberation from the body, becomes solely immersed in the bliss of the experience of the self.

योऽन्तस्सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथाऽन्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥ २४ ॥

24. He whose happiness is solely within, who has his place of pleasure solely within, and who has similarly all his illumination within—he is the yogin, who, having become the brahman, attains the bliss of the brahman.

248. The wise man (*budha*) mentioned here is compared by T. C. with one possessed of the five forms of external contentment relating to abstinence from objects of sense, as described in the *Sāṅkhya Kārikas*, 50. He sees five kinds of evil in the enjoyments of sense-objects, connected with the way in which they are won, protected, and enjoyed, their tendency to waste and the injuries caused to others in all this.

He who, giving up all the experiences of the external objects, is happy within, that is, has his sole happiness in the experience of the self, who has his place of pleasure (*ārāma*) within, that is, whose sole pleasure-garden is the self;<sup>249</sup> and in respect of whom the self by its own qualities develops and sustains happiness<sup>250</sup>—he who is of this description and who accordingly has his illumination within, that is, who lives, having his knowledge centred solely on the self he, the *yogin*, who has become the *brahman*,<sup>251</sup> attains the bliss of the *brahman*, that is, the bliss<sup>252</sup> of the experience of the self<sup>253</sup>

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषा ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानस्सर्वभूतहिते रता ॥ २५ ॥

25 The sages who are freed from dualism, whose minds are well directed, and who are devoted to the welfare of all beings, become cleansed of all sins and obtain the bliss of the *brahman*

The sages are the seers who are intent on the vision of the self. In their case dualism is destroyed: that is, they are freed from pairs of opposites like cold and heat *etc*<sup>254</sup>. They have their minds well directed: that is, their minds are established in the self. They are devoted to the welfare of all beings: that is, they are intent on things which contribute to the welfare of all beings, as if in their own case. Those who are like this have all sins opposed to the attainment of the self destroyed, and obtain the bliss of the *brahman*<sup>255</sup>

249. Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'ārāma' as 'kṛīḍā', sport

250. The essential qualities of the self like freedom from sin, knowledge and bliss stimulate discussions and writings which give happiness like sport (T C)

251 'Becoming the *brahman*' here refers to freedom from the delusion of identifying the self with the body and the realisation of the true nature of the self in the fullness of its knowledge and other qualities

252 T C contrasts another commentary which glosses 'nirvāṇa' as 'śānti', or peace

253. To the *yogin* mentioned in this verse, the self is the object of enjoyment, the place of enjoyment and the auxiliary instruments of enjoyment (T C)

254 Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'dvaudha' as 'doubt' and Śrī Madhva as 'doubt or misapprehension'

255. The details of the moral and spiritual exercises for attaining success in the vision of equality have been unfolded in successive stages from V 20 onwards. In this verse, the heart of the matter—devotion to the welfare of all beings—is expounded (T C)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches that for those having the character mentioned above, the *brahman* is easy of attainment

कामक्रोधवियुक्ताना यतीना यतचेतसाम् ।

अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाण वतंते विजितात्मनाम् ॥ २६ ॥

26 To those who are free from desire and anger, who are striving (for self-realisation), who are regulated in thought and who have attained self-conquest,<sup>256</sup> the bliss of the *brahman* is close at hand on all sides

To those who are free from desire and anger, who are striving, that is, given over to the practice of self-restraint, who are regulated in thought, that is, whose minds are under control, and who have attained self-conquest, that is, whose minds are completely conquered<sup>257</sup>—to such the bliss of the *brahman* is close at hand on all sides<sup>258</sup> The meaning is that to persons of this kind, the bliss of the *brahman* is already in hand

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) concludes the discussion of the *karmā-yoga*, already described, as culminating in the practice of mental concentration which has for its object (the realisation of) the self

स्पर्शान् कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्याश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवो ।

प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाम्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥ २७ ॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायण ।

विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यस्सदा मुक्त एव स ॥ २८ ॥

256 Those who do not agree that there is a recapitulation here of the teachings of V 20–25 adopt the reading, '*viditātmanām*' for '*ajitātmanām*' (T C). Śrī Sāṅkara adopts it

257 T C points out that the freedom from anger and desire and the striving refer to verses 20–21, the regulation of thought to verse 24, and the attainment of self-conquest to verse 22 Thus '*yatinām*' is understood in its etymological sense, so as to hark back to earlier teachings, but Śrī Sāṅkara understands by the term ascetics

258 This indicates the promise of quick attainment Śrī Sāṅkara, however interprets '*abhitāḥ*' as 'both when alive and dead'

27. *Keeping out all external contacts, directing the eyes to the middle point between the eyebrows, equalising (the duration of) the incoming breath and the outgoing breath passing through the nostrils*

28. *Whichever meditating sage has his senses, faculty of attention and intellect under control, is devoted to mokṣa as his highest object of attainment and has got rid of desire, fear and anger—he certainly is a liberated person at all times* <sup>259</sup>

Keeping out all contacts with external objects, that is, preventing the outward activities of the senses, seated with an erect body in a seat fit for the practice of meditation and mental concentration (*yoga*), fixing the eyes on the midpoint between the eyebrows, that is, at the root of the nose, equalising the incoming breath and the outgoing breath, that is, making the exhalations and the inhalations move equally;<sup>260</sup> making the senses, the faculty of attention and the intellect not susceptible to engage in any pursuit other than the vision of the self; in consequence, being rid of desire, fear and anger;<sup>261</sup> devoted to *mokṣa* as his highest object of attainment, that is, having *mokṣa* as his sole objective,—the sage, that is, one who is intent on the vision of his self (and who is of this description), he, indeed, is a liberated person at all times. The meaning is that he is, indeed, a liberated person even in the stage of practising the means, as he would be in the stage of attainment <sup>262</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) (now) teaches how the *karma-yoga* described is easy to practise—(the *karma-yoga*) which has the concentrated meditation (*yoga*) as its crown and of which the obligatory and occasional rites are essential elements

259 There seems to be little difference between the *yoga* of meditation and mental concentration taught in these two stanzas and elsewhere in the *Gītā* and the *yoga* of eight stages taught by Patañjali. Professor Rangacharya states: "Indeed, *dhyāna-yoga* in the *Bhagavadgītā* means the same thing as the *aṅgāṅga-yoga*." (*L. G.*, I., p. 534)

260. Neither inhaling deeply, nor exhaling so (*T. C.*). Śrī Madhva thinks that the practice of retention of breath or *kumbhaka* is referred to

261. Keeping out contacts with objects of the senses leads to the control of the senses, the *manas* and the intellect, so that they do not stray away from the quest for self-realisation (*T. C.*).

262. He is almost an emancipated soul, because his attempts will not prove futile.



भोक्तार यज्ञतपसा सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।

सुहृद सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मा शान्तिमृच्छति ॥ २९ ॥

29 *Knowing Me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, as the Great Lord of all the worlds, and the friend of all beings, he attains peace*

Knowing Me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, as the Great Lord of all the worlds and as the friend of all beings, he attains peace,<sup>263</sup> that is, attains happiness even while performing *karma-yoga* 'Him who is the Great Lord of all the worlds' means 'Him who is the Lord of all the lords of the worlds'. For it is said in the *Śruti*: "Him who is the Highest Lord, being the greatest of all the lords" (*Śvet Up VI 7*) Knowing Me as the Great Lord of all the worlds and as the friend of all and regarding *karma-yoga* as of the nature of My worship, he becomes engaged in it happily Such is the meaning All (creatures),<sup>264</sup> indeed, strive to please a friend

263. Śrī Saṅkara here takes 'śānti' as referring to the peace of *mokṣa* which comes from the cessation of *saṃsāra*.

264. 'All' here means not merely those following the *śāstras*, but also the mass of men and even animals (*T. C.*).

## CHAPTER VI

श्रीसगवानुवाच—

अनाश्रित कर्मफल कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निरन चाक्रिय ॥ १ ॥

THE LORD SAID

*1 He who, not depending on the fruits of works, performs works, (regarding such performance) as an end in itself, is a sannyāsīn and a yogīn—but not one who has no sacrificial fire, nor one who does not perform (prescribed) duties*

What has been taught so far is *karma-yoga* with all its essentials and auxiliaries. Now the process of the *yoga* which is of the nature of the vision of the self and which can be attained by means of *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* is discussed. There it is sought to establish firmly the character of *karma-yoga* as a self-sufficient way (for the realisation of the self), for this purpose, *karma-yoga* is referred to again as being of the form of knowledge and as having for its crown the vision of *yoga* <sup>265</sup>

He who, without depending upon such fruits of works as *Svarga*, performs works, thinking, "The carrying out of works alone is the purpose (*kūrya*)" <sup>266</sup> Works by themselves are an end to me, because of their constituting the worship of the Supreme Person who is our loving friend in every way. <sup>267</sup> There is nothing (ulterior) to be attained by means of these (works)"—(he who performs works thus) he is a *sannyāsīn*, that is, one intent on *jñāna-yoga*, and also a *yogīn*, that is, one intent on *karma-yoga*. The meaning is that he is devoted to both these, which constitute the means for achieving the *yoga* which is of the nature of the vision of the self

265 The summary of Chapter VI given here is based on *G S* 10. In the opening verse here, the first line refers again to *karma-yoga* as of the form of knowledge, while the second shows *karma-yoga* to be self-sufficient

266 'Kāryam' is thus interpreted. Śrī Śaṅkara takes it to mean what is laid down in the *āśtras* as obligatory

267. Vide V 29.

“ But not one who has no sacrificial fire, nor one who does not perform (prescribed) duties. ”<sup>268</sup> That is, not one who has not taken up the performance of ordained works like sacrifices etc., nor one who is devoted to mere knowledge. The purport is that for such a person there is only the discipline of knowledge, while for one intent on *karma-yoga* there are both (knowledge and works)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches (now) that there is also (an element of) knowledge in the *karma-yoga* with the characteristics already described

य सन्यास इति प्राहुर्योग त विद्धि पाण्डव ।

न ह्यसन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ २ ॥

2 That which they call *sannyāsa* (or renunciation), O Arjuna (*Pāṇ-dava*), understand that to be (*karma-yoga*). For (among those practising various forms of *karma-yoga*), no one whose delusive identification (of the body with the self) is not given up, becomes a *yogin*

Understand that to be *karma-yoga* only which they describe as *sannyāsa*, that is, as *jñāna-yoga*, as the knowledge of the true nature of the self. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains this by the statement, “ For no one whose delusive identification is not given up becomes a *yogin* ”. One whose delusive identification<sup>269</sup> is given up is one by whom the identification of the self in the *prakṛti*, which is different from the self, is given up, is utterly rejected, by means of the investigation of the true nature of the self. One who is not like this is one whose delusive identification is not given up. For one who is not of this kind cannot become a *karma-yogin* among the *karma-yogins* mentioned. For it has already been stated “ He all of whose undertakings are free from desire (for fruits) and a delusive identification (of the body with the self) ” (IV. 19)

268 Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that the *karman* is here praised as having the worth of both the *sannyāsin* (who has no sacred fires) and the *yogin* (who has no duties). Śrī Rāmānuja perhaps equates the *sannyāsin* with the man without sacrificial fires and the man without duties with one practising mere *jñāna-yoga*. After natively, the mere *jñāna yogin* may be indicated as one devoid of sacred fires and ordained works.

269 The word, ‘ *sankalpa* ’, which ordinarily means ‘ desire ’ is thus explained. Vide Note 191 under IV. 19. Śrī Śaṅkara takes ‘ *sankalpa* ’ to mean ‘ attachment ’ and explains it as ‘ attachment to fruits ’.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) (now) teaches that *karma-yoga* alone achieves *yoga* (or the vision of the self) without mischance

आरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

3. In the case of the sage who desires to ascend to *yoga*, work is said to be the means. In the case of the same person, tranquillity is said to be the means after he has ascended to *yoga*

In the case of an aspirant after *mokṣa* who desires to attain *yoga*, that is, the vision of the self, only *karma-yoga* is declared to be the means. In the case of the same person when he has ascended to *yoga*, that is, when he is settled in *yoga*, tranquillity, that is, cessation from works, is said to be the means.<sup>270</sup> The meaning is that works ought to be performed till the attainment of *mokṣa*<sup>271</sup> in the form of the vision of the self.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now proceeds to say when he (i.e., such a sage) becomes settled in *yoga*

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।

सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥ ४ ॥

4. For when one has no lingering attachment for the objects of the senses, nor for activities (connected with them), then, indeed, has he renounced all desires and is described as one who has ascended to *yoga*

When this *yogin*, on account of his disposition being such as to have only the experience of the self, has no lingering attachment, that is, is not capable of attachment to sense-objects, that is, material things other than the self, and activities<sup>272</sup> connected with them, then, indeed,

270. The interpretation that the sage here mentioned is the ascetic and the *śama* (or tranquillity) is asceticism is not accepted (T C).

271. The vision of the self, which is almost equal to *mokṣa*, is here called *mokṣa* by courtesy (T C)

272. Śrī Śaṅkara understands by *karmas* works ordained by the scripture as obligatory, optional, occasional and forbidden. Śrī Rāmānuja takes them to be activities meant for the realisation of the experiences of the sense-objects. T. C. points out that this would include all activities—those enjoined, those forbidden, and those belonging to neither of these categories

he has renounced all desires<sup>273</sup> and is described as having ascended to *yoga*. Therefore, to one who wishes to ascend to *yoga*, he being (then) susceptible to the experience of the objects of the senses, *karma-yoga* which consists in the practice of non-attachment to these objects, becomes the sole cause for success in *yoga*. Hence one who desires to ascend to *yoga* should perform *karma-yoga* which consists in the practice of non-attachment to sense-objects.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa further) explains the same

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥

5 One should uplift the self by means of the mind and should not cause the self to sink down. For the mind alone is the friend of the self and the mind alone is the enemy of the self

By means of the *ātman*, that is, by means of the mind—a mind which has no lingering attachment for sense-objects—one should uplift the self. One should not cause the self to sink down by means of a mind which is of the opposite kind (i.e., a mind which has lingering attachment)<sup>274</sup>. For the *ātman* alone, that is, the mind alone, is the friend of the self, and it alone is the enemy of the self

बन्धुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६ ॥

6 The mind is the friend of him by whom by himself the mind itself has been conquered. But for him whose mind is not (under) his (control), the mind, like an enemy, remains in a state of enmity

By whichever man, by himself, his mind is conquered<sup>275</sup> from sense-objects, that mind is his friend. In relation to one whose mind is not his, that is, in relation to one whose mind is unconquered, his own mind, indeed, like an enemy, remains in a state of enmity. The

273. 'Sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsi' is glossed by Śrī Sāṅkara as, one who has renounced all things which impel desires for objectives in this world and the next

274. T. C. explains that the figure is of the self struggling in the sea of *samsāra*. The mind can either lift up the self and save it, or make it sink down into ruin

275. The *ātman* which is conquered is, according to Śrī Sāṅkara, the *kārya karaka-saṅghāta*, the aggregate of the bodiless elements

meaning is that it works against (the attainment of) supreme bliss for himself. It has been so stated by the venerable Parāśara also. "The mind alone is the cause of bondage and emancipation. The mind which is attached to sense-objects makes for bondage, and the mind devoid of (attachment to) sense-objects, makes for emancipation" (V P VI 7 28)

The state suitable for commencing (the) *yoga* (of meditation and mental concentration for attaining the vision of the self) is (now) mentioned

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानावमानयोः ॥ ७ ॥

7 In the case of him whose mind is conquered and who is very calm, the soul is well collected in heat and cold and happiness and misery, as also in honour and dishonour

In heat and cold and happiness and misery, and in honour and dishonour, greatly is the soul composed, that is, (it is) exceedingly well collected (so as to be fit for meditation), in the case of him whose *ātman* is conquered, that is, whose mind is conquered, whose mind is free from agitation and who is very calm (having his senses under control) 276

It is the individual soul (*pratyagātman*) which is here called the supreme soul (*paramātman*), because only it (i.e., the individual soul) is required by the context, and because even in regard to it there is the state of being the supreme soul relatively to earlier states successively. Alternatively, the construing may be as follows ' *Ātmā param samāhitaḥ* '. (The soul is exceedingly well collected). 277

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥ ८ ॥

276. Śrī Śaṅkara takes the second line of the verse to be a separate sentence and supplies ' *samāh* ' to complete the sense.

277. (i) The second alternative, suggesting that the self becomes the subject of clear meditation, is preferred by T. C. (ii) Jayatīrtha who has written explanatory notes on Śrī Madhva's commentary, notices a reading of Bhāskara in the first line - ' *Parūṁsaḥ samā matih* '.

8 *The yogin whose mind is satisfied with positive knowledge (of the self) and knowledge of distinction (of the self from other things), who is established in the self in its pure state, whose senses are conquered, and to whom a clod of earth, a stone and gold are equal (in value)—he is spoken of as fit for yoga*

That *karma-yogin* whose mind is satisfied with positive knowledge and knowledge of distinction<sup>278</sup> that is, whose mind is satisfied with (positive) knowledge about the true nature of the self and with knowledge of distinction about (its) nature being distinct from that of the *prakṛti* who is established in the self in its pure form, that is, who is established in the self which is of the form of knowledge common to all and continuing through all states like those of the god etc.<sup>279</sup> whose senses are conquered thereby indeed and to whom a clod of earth, a stone and gold are equal, that is, who finds equal use in a clod of earth, a stone and gold on account of his lacking the feeling about particular material things that they are enjoyable, because of his devotion to the true nature of the self as distinct from the *prakṛti*—here (such a *karma-yogin*) is spoken of as being fit for *yoga*, that is, fit for the practice of *yoga* which is of the form of the vision of the self

Moreover

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।

माघृत्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ ९ ॥

9 *He who is equal-minded towards well-wishers, friends, foes, those who are indifferent, neutrals, hateful persons, and relatives, and even towards the good and the sinful—he excels (in fitness for the practice of yoga)*

Wellwishers are those who wish well to one, irrespective of differences in age. Friends are wellwishers of the same age (as one is). Foes are those who wish evil (to one) on account of some particular

278 'Jñāna' is explained by Śrī Śaṅkara as knowledge as taught by the *śāstras* and 'vijñāna' as its realisation in experience. Śrī Madhva explains 'vijñāna' as special kinds of knowledge or as direct vision of the Lord.

279 Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'kūṣaṭha' to mean 'one who is unshakable', while Śrī Madhva glosses it as 'one free from change' or 'one like the enter of spire'. Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation is justified by *T U* whether 'kūṣa' means an anvil, a peak, the position of the founder of a family or uniformity.

cause. Indifferent persons are free from the both the feelings (of friendship and hostility) on account of absence of causes for both. Those who are even congenitally free of both (these feelings) are neutrals. Hateworthy persons are those that wish evil (to one) even from birth. Relatives are wellwishers even from birth. The good are men devoted to virtue. The sinful are devoted to sin. On account of the self being the sole objective (of *yoga*) and on account of there being no help and no opposition (therefor) from wellwishers, friends, etc., he who is equal-minded towards them excels<sup>280</sup> in the matter of fitness for the practice of *yoga*.

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मान रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ १० ॥

10. The yogin should constantly apply his mind to (the practice of) *yoga*, staying in a solitary spot all alone, having discursive thinking under control, free from desire and without the sense of possession.

The yogin who is thus devoted to *karma-yoga* should constantly, that is, day after day at the time of the practice of *yoga*, apply his mind to the practice of *yoga*, that is, make himself intensely absorbed in seeing his self. Such is the meaning. He must stay in a spot which is solitary, that is, devoid of people and free from noise. And even there, he must be all alone, that is, must not have a second person (as his companion)<sup>281</sup>

He must have under his control his *ātman* as *chitta*, that is, he must have his discursive thinking under control<sup>282</sup>. He must be free from desire, that is, he must not depend on anything whatever other than the self and be without the sense of possession, that is, without the feeling of 'mine-ness' in regard to anything other than it (the self).

280. Śrī Śaṅkara mentions a reading 'vimuchyate' for 'visīyate'. T. C. rejects the alternative version for the reason that the context can be only about an advanced stage in fitness for *yoga*, when the vision of the self is imminent and even instruction from the good is not needed.

281. Śrī Śaṅkara points out that the epithets 'ekāli' and 'rahasi sthitaḥ' indicate the renunciation of the ascetic.

282. In 'yatatattvātmā', 'ātman' is the mind, and 'chitta' refers to its thinking activity or to the mind as the thinking principle of consciousness (T. C.).



शुची देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।

नात्युच्छ्रित नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११ ॥

तत्रैकाग्रं मन कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

11 Having established for himself, in a place which is pure, a firm seat, neither too high nor too low and well spread over with cloth, deer-skin and kusa grass

12 There, he should sit on the seat, making his faculty of attention one-pointed and keeping under control the activities of the mind and the senses, and carry on (the practice of) yoga for the purification of the self

In a place which is pure— in a place which has never been impure, which is not managed nor owned by impure persons and which has no contact with impure things—having established a seat which is of wood or similar material, which is neither too high nor too low, and which is, well spread over by cloth, deer-skin and kusa grass,<sup>283</sup> and seated in it which is conducive to calmness of mind and which is provided with a back-rest, keeping the faculty of attention one-pointed on *yoga* (or the vision of the self),<sup>284</sup> and keeping under control in all ways the activities of the mind and the senses<sup>285</sup>—he should practise *yoga*, that is, strive for the vision of the self for the purification of the self, that is, for eliminating its bondage

सम कायशिरोग्रीव धारयन्नचल स्थिरम् ।

संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्व दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीः ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।

मनस्संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥ १४ ॥

283 Another reading of the commentary mentions these in the reverse order—'spread over by kusa grass, deer-skin and cloth'. *T C* refers to a view that the order is indeterminate. Sri Śaṅkara says that the proper order is the reverse of what is given in the stanza

284. For '*yogaskāgram*', there is another reading, '*aryākulamekāgram*' (*T C*)

285. The view that *yoga* is the complete cessation of all the activities of the mind without exception is here refuted (*T. C.*).

13 *Keeping the body, head and neck erect,<sup>286</sup> unshakable and firm, steadily looking at the tip of the nose, without casting glances in all directions:*

14. *Exceedingly calm and happy in mind, rid of fear, observing the vow of celibacy, keeping his mind well under control, meditating on Me—he must be attentive in yoga, holding Me to be supreme*

Keeping, the body, head and neck erect and unshakable, and (keeping them), on account of having a back-rest, firm, without casting glances in all directions but steadily looking at the tip of the nose,<sup>287</sup> exceedingly calm in mind, that is, with the mind extremely happy, rid of fear, observing the vow of celibacy,<sup>288</sup> keeping the mind well under control, making the mind dwell on Me; he must be a *yukta*, that is, attentive (in *yoga*), holding Me to be supreme, that is, he should remain thinking about Me only.<sup>289</sup>

युञ्जन्नेव सदाऽऽत्मान योगी नियतमानस ।

शान्ति निर्वाणपरमा मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

15 *The yogin, by thus constantly applying his mind (to meditation on Me), with his mind well controlled, attains to the peace, which is the supreme height of bliss and is enduringly established in Me*

He (the *yogin*), by thus constantly applying his *ātman*, that is, mind, on Me who am the Supreme *Brahman*, the Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*) and the holy and auspicious object of meditation for

286 Śrī Śaṅkara reads 'sthura' for 'sthiram'.

287 *T C* quote with approval Śrī Śaṅkara's suggestion that 'as it were' should be understood after 'looking steadily at'. What is meant is that the eyes should be merely focussed on the tip of the nose while the mind is concentrated on the self. 'The tip of the nose' here contrasts with 'the midpoint of the eyebrows' in V 27. *T C* is of the view that in both the places only the tip of the nose is meant.

288 Śrī Śaṅkara interprets 'brahmacāri-vrata' as the dedicated life of the student in the first stage of life—doing service to his preceptor, eating food obtained by begging, etc.

289 The two expressions, 'maccetta' and 'maḥ-para' may be distinguished as respectively beginning the meditation on the Lord and thinking of none else but Him. Alternatively, the former may refer to the Lord being enjoyable to the mind, and the latter to His being regarded as high and holy.

the mind,<sup>290</sup> with his mind well controlled, that is, with his mind steady on account of his becoming purified in mind through contact with Me, attains to the peace which is enduringly established in Me and which is the supreme height of bliss. That is, he attains to the peace which is the highest limit of bliss<sup>291</sup> and which is *mat-samsthā*, is established enduringly in Me.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), after thus having taught that the mind should stay in the Lord, who is the holy and auspicious object of meditation, so as to bring about purification of the mind, proceeds to speak of other requisites of *yoga* for the person who undertakes the *yoga* of the self,

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।

न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

16 *Yoga is not (possible) to the person, O Arjuna, who eats too much nor to him who does not eat at all and (it is) not (possible) to him who sleeps too much, nor surely to him who is (ever) wakeful*

17 *Yoga becomes the destroyer of misery to him who has proper food and recreation, who is properly active in his actions, and who has proper (periods of) sleep and wakefulness*

Eating too much and not at all eating are both opposed to *yoga*. So also, too much recreation and no recreation at all, and too much of sleep and (too much of) wakefulness. So, too, are too much exertion and no exertion at all. *Yoga*, which destroys all misery, that is, removes bondage, becomes a success to him who is moderate in eating and recreation, moderate in exertion, and moderate in sleep and waking.

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निस्पृहस्सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

290 See Note 86

291 Śrī Śaṅkara takes *nirvāṇa-parama* as a *bakurīk* compound meaning 'whose culmination is *mokṣa*', while Śrī Mādhva glosses it as 'belonging to a time posterior to death'

18. *When the well-restrained mind abides in the self alone, then, free of all longing for all objects of desire, he is said to be fit for yoga.*

When the mind which is hunting after useful objects abides in the self alone, that is, is well established (there), that is, on account of finding in the self alone an unsurpassed objective it abides there alone steadily, without movement—then, being free of longing for all objects of desire, one is spoken of as a *yukta*. He is said to be fit for *yoga*

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १९ ॥

19 *The way in which a lamp in a windless place does not shake—that has been considered (by accomplished yogins) to be similar to (the way of functioning of) the self of the yogin who has his mind under control and who is engaged in yoga (or the vision of the self).*

As the lamp in a windless place does not shake, does not move, but remains steady with its shining light—this is the similitude for the essential nature of the self of the *yogin* who has his mind under control, who has stopped all other kinds of mental activities and who is engaged in the vision (*yoga*) relating to the self. The meaning is that the self remains with its steadily shining light of knowledge<sup>292</sup>, on account of the mind being free from all other kinds of activities, like a lamp, which, being kept in a place sheltered from winds, has an unshaking flame.

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्ध योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यस्तद्बुद्धिबाह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥

292 The self, while being knowledge as substance, has also knowledge as an attribute. It is *dharmā bhūta-jñāna* ('consciousness characterised by the characteristic of awareness'), and its light of knowledge is *dharma-bhūta jñāna* ('the characteristic of awareness'). Prof. M. Rangacharya points out that "the steady, unquivering one-pointedness of the flame is intended to indicate that in the condition of internal *yogic* concentration, there is no movement of the mind at all, and that, nevertheless, it is not all darkness within, but is on the contrary concentrated light." He adds, "The self-luminosity of consciousness and its self-awareness become intensified by this process of concentration..." (L. G. I., p. 589).

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं तत ।

यस्मिन् स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणाऽपि विचाल्यते ॥ २२ ॥

त विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥

20. Where the mind, restrained by the practice of yoga, is greatly delighted, and where seeing the ātman by the ātman one is gratified by the ātman solely.

21 Where one knows what that intense joy is which is beyond the senses and (yet) is comprehensible by the intellect, and staying wherein one indeed does not move from that state

22 That on gaining which one does not consider any other gain superior thereto and being established in which one is not disturbed even by great misery

23 Let him understand that state of separation from (all) association with pain to be what is denoted by yoga This yoga must be practised with determination and with a mind free of despondency

Where, in *yoga*, the mind which is restrained everywhere by, reason of its practising *yoga*, is greatly delighted, that is, is delighted at this (experience) being surpassing happiness and where, in *yoga* seeing the self (ātman) by the mind (ātman) one is gratified solely by the self,<sup>293</sup> feeling the need for nothing else and where, in *yoga*, one knows, that is, experiences what that intense joy<sup>294</sup> is which is beyond the senses and which can be understood only by an intellect thinking on the self and remaining fixed wherein, in (that) *yoga*, one does not move from that state, that is, that condition (of *yoga*) on account of excess of joy (therein) having gained which *yoga*, he longs for it alone when he rests from the *yoga* and does not value any other gain and abiding in which *yoga*, even when resting (from it), one is not disturbed even by great misery such as (is caused by) the death of a son endowed with good qualities: let him understand that separation from (all) association with pain—which constitutes the opposite of association with

293. Śrī Madhva explains "seeing the Lord in the body with the help of the mind"

294. T C notices a reading, 'yatra', for "yat-tat" in 21.

pain—to be what is denoted by the word, 'yoga'. This *yoga* should be practised with a mind free of despondency, with a mind elated, through the conviction (even) at the initial stage that *yoga* is of this nature

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामास्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानिषेवत ।

मनसैवेन्द्रियग्राम विनियम्य समन्तत ॥ २४ ॥

शनैःशनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थ मन कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥ २५ ॥

24. Giving up without exception all desires born of volition controlling well by the *manas* the group of senses on all sides

25. In gradual stages one should stop (thinking of things other than the self) with the aid of the intellect that is grasped by firm resolution; and then one should not think of anything (else), having caused the *manas* to remain firmly fixed on the self

There are two kinds of objects of desire—those born of contact (between the senses and their objects) like heat, cold etc., and those born of volition, like sons, lands etc. Of these those born of volition are by their own nature such as can be given up. Giving up all these by means of the mind by meditating on their lack of connection (with the self) giving up, in respect of the unavoidable (desires) born of contact, the feelings of pleasure and pain on their account restraining the entire group of the senses on all sides, that is, from (contact with) all objects of senses and stopping thinking of all objects other than the self in gradual stages with the aid of the intellect grasped by firm resolve, that is, possessed of discrimination—one must not think of anything,<sup>295</sup> after making the *manas* firmly fixed on the self

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वश नयेत् ॥ २६ ॥

36 Whithersoever the mind, which is (by nature) wavering and (hence) unsteady (in the self), moves out, he should everywhere there restrain it and bring it under control (so as to remain within) the self alone.

295 Other than the *ātman*, whether friendly, unfriendly or indifferent (T. C.)

Whithersoever the mind, which because of its having a wavering nature is unsteady in the self, moves out in consequence of its proneness to have contact with sense-objects, he should, everywhere there, re-training the mind with effort, bring it under control so as to remain within the self alone by reflecting over the pre-eminent happiness (therefrom)

प्रशान्तमनस ह्येन योगिन सुखमुत्तमम् ।

उपैति शान्तरजस ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ २७ ॥

27 For there comes supreme happiness to this yogin whose mind has been made extremely calm, who is (hence) free of sin, in whom (thereby) *rajas* is allayed, and who has (thus) become the *brahman*

Supreme happiness which is of the nature of the experience of the self comes to this *yogin* whose mind has been made extremely calm, that is, whose mind does not move from the self, whose mind is well placed in the self, all of whose sins without exception are burnt up in consequence thereof only, whose *rajas* thereby alone is allayed, that is, in whom the quality of *rajas* is annihilated, and who has therefore become the *brahman*, that is, who remains steadily in his own essential nature. 'Hi' (rendered as 'for') is used to indicate a casual connection. The meaning is "because of the essential nature of the self having the form of supreme happiness" <sup>296</sup>

एव युञ्जन् सदाऽऽत्मान योगी विगतकल्मष ।

सुखेन ब्रह्मस्पर्शमत्यन्त सुखमश्नुते ॥ २८ ॥

28 Thus, applying himself to the yoga of the self and freed of sins, the yogin enjoys at all times easily the limitless bliss of contact with the *brahman*

<sup>296</sup> The epithets of the *yogin* in the stanza are re arranged so as to form a chain of causes and effects. To become the *brahman* here, as in V 24, is to realise the essential nature of the self. As T C puts it, the *brahmabhūta* is to be differentiated from one who is not free from the qualities of what is not the *brahman*, that is, not free from the state of misery caused by such things as the delusion of mistaking the body for the self. Śrī Śankara glosses 'brahmabhūta' as 'jīvanmukta'. Śrī Madhva must be deemed to understand the expression as in V 24—'brahman bhūta', which in turn is 'to be devoted to the Lord as described in V 17'

Thu , in the manner stated above,<sup>297</sup> applying himself to the *yoga* of the self and solely by that means becoming freed of all previous sins, he enjoys at all times easily, that is, without effort, the limitless, that is, unmeasured bliss of contact with the *brahman*, having the form of the experience of the *brahman* (or the self).

Then the developed state of *yoga* is taught to have four stages<sup>298</sup>

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ २९ ॥

29. He whose mind is engaged in *yoga* (or vision of the self) has equality of vision everywhere he sees his self as existing in all beings (i e , selves) and all beings (i e , selves) in his self

Because there is similarity between his self and other beings (i e , selves), when they are in a state of separation from the *prakṛti*, on account of (all of them) having only nature of knowledge, and because the inequality among them rests on the *prakṛti*, one whose mind is engaged in *yoga* has equality of vision everywhere, in respect of all selves as separated from the *prakṛti*, on account of their having the nature only of knowledge he sees his self as existing in all beings (or selves) and all beings (or selves) in his self

The meaning is that he sees his self as similar in form to every being (or self) and all beings (or selves) as similar in form to his self It is taught that when one self is seen, all things which are selves become seen, on account of all things which are selves being similar to it (i e., the self which is seen) This is supported by the statement, "He has equality of vision everywhere," the repetition of the same in "This *yoga* as (the vision of) equality, which has been taught by

297. Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Mādhva read the first two words of the stanza in a different order

298 The four stages are steps in the realisation of the essential similarity or equality of all selves—(i) because they are all of the nature of knowledge, (ii) because when freed from *karma* they have the highest similarity with the Lord, (iii) because in their essential nature their knowledge is unlimited like that of the Lord, and (iv) because they are all equally unconnected with the joys and sorrows arising from embodiments



You" (VI. 33), and the statement, "For that which, when unsullied (or free of contact with the *prakṛti*), everywhere is the *brahman*" (V 19) <sup>299</sup>

यो मा पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याह न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

30 He who sees Me in all (selves) and sees all (selves) in Me—to him I am not lost, nor is he lost to Me

He who, having reached a more developed stage of *yoga* and realised (intellectually) similarity of nature with Me, sees similarity to Myself in all things which are selves, when they are free of *punya* and *pāpa* and when they remain in their own essential nature, as declared in (the *Śruti* text), "Being untainted, he (i.e., the wise seer) attains the highest degree of equality (with the *Brahman*)" (*Mund. Up* III 13), and sees Me in all things which are selves and sees all things that are selves in Me—that is, on seeing one of them (i.e., the selves), sees another also to be thus, on account of their similarity to one another—to such a person, who sees the nature of his own self, I do not become lost because of the state of similarity to him—that is, I do not attain the state of being invisible (to him) He (i.e., that *yogin*), seeing his own self as similar to Me, always remains within sight to Me also when I am seeing Myself, because of similarity with Me <sup>300</sup>

299 Śrī Śaṅkara understands the teaching here to be about the *Brahman* being the sole reality. Śrī Madhva takes the '*ātman*' to be the Lord here. According to Śrī Rāmānuja, the *sama dar-ana* or equality of vision mentioned in the second line of the stanza is explained in the first line in terms of seeing all selves in one's self and one's self in all selves. When of two similar things it is said that each is seen in the other, it is their similarity which is meant. The context, and earlier and later statements also indicate only equality among the selves.

300 It is only in the state of final release that the self attains the highest degree of similarity with the Lord. But the *yogin*, who knows this from the *Śruti*, sees in his version the self, when freed from *karma*, as like unto the Lord and the Lord as like unto the self. The experience of the Lord as similar to the self is never lost to him, even as 'the special regard of the Lord never fails him. (The verb, '*na*:', is used here in sense of getting out of sight or becoming invisible, which is also one of its recognised meanings.) Śrī Madhva takes the Lord not being lost to the *yogin* as His continuing to be responsible for his welfare and progress, his not being lost to the Lord means that he becomes the devotee of the Lord.

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थित ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ ३१ ॥

31 *That yogin, who, being established in oneness, worships Me as existing in all beings—he lives in Me, although (he may be) living in all manner of ways*

He who being established in the state of *yoga* in oneness (with Me) on account of (his self) being solely of the form of uncontracted knowledge, worships Me firmly by giving up differences based on the *prakṛti*—that *yogin*, even while risen (from *yogic* meditation), in whatever manner he may live, lives in Me—sees Me only—when seeing his own self and all beings (or selves) It is meant that he sees similarity to Myself in his own self and in all beings (or selves) <sup>301</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now proceeds to speak of the highest stage even beyond this

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र सम पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥ ३२ ॥

32 *He who, on account of the similarity everywhere of the selves, sees the happiness, or, it may be, the misery, as the same everywhere—that yogin, O Arjuna, is regarded as the highest*

He who—on account of the similarity between his own self and other selves, arising from their being solely of the form of uncontracted knowledge—sees the happiness in the form of the sons etc., which exists everywhere in his own case and in that of others, and the misery in the form of the death of those (sons) and similar things (existing everywhere in his own case and in that of others), as being the same on account of equality in lack of relationship that is, he who sees such things as the birth and death of his own sons as being equal to such

301. Here are taught contemplation on the similarity (between his selves and other selves and between his self and the Lord) arising from (all of them) being of the form of uncontracted knowledge, when (the selves are) free of the ignorance of *karma*, and also by the force of the tendency generated by it, the continuance of such contemplation with ease and naturalness even when risen from meditation. The oneness mentioned is the giving up of the differences of the extent of knowledge based on association with particular bodies as a result of *karma*. Oneness also results from the selves being the inseparable attributes of the Lord (T. C.)

things as the birth and death of the sons of others —that *yogin* is regarded as the highest. He is regarded as having reached the utmost limit of (the) *yoga* (which has for its object the realisation of the individual self) <sup>302</sup>

अर्जुन उवाच—

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।

एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्मिन् स्थिराम् ॥ ३३ ॥

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ ३४ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

33 This *Yoga* as (the vision of) equality (among the selves and between the selves and the Brahman), which has been taught by You, O *Kṛṣṇa* (*Madhusūdana*)—I do not see (the possibility of) its steady continuance because of (the) fickleness (of the mind)

34 For the mind, O *Kṛṣṇa*, is fickle, liable to agitation, powerful and (perversely) stubborn. I consider that its subjugation is very difficult like (that) of the wind

That *yoga* which has been taught by You as the vision of equality everywhere among all the selves which till now have been (always) experienced as fundamentally different (as if in kind) by reason of the differences among men, gods etc., and also of the differences between the individual selves and the Lord, (a vision of equality) which arises from their similarity to one another on account of their being solely of the form of knowledge and of their similarity to the Lord on account of their freedom (in essence) from bondage to *karma*<sup>303</sup>—in regard to this *yoga*. I do not see (the possibility of) steady continuance on account of the fickleness of the mind

302 *T C* suggests that the highest stage of *yoga* is marked by the absence of grief even when the cause for it exists in an intensive form. This equanimity is brought about by pondering over the fact that variations in grief and joy in the world are due to variations in *karma*. *T C* also refers to a school of thought which regards verses 29 and 30 as enjoining meditation and 31 and 32 as describing two stages in the result attained thereby

303 *T C* notices a reading which adds a 'cha' after 'i vara samyena'. This would mean that similarity to the Lord arises also on account of being solely of the form of knowledge

For, indeed, the mind which by itself is fickle even in regard to objects incessantly cherished (lit. practised) by it and which cannot be firmly established by a person in any one place, agitates that person violently and wanders away elsewhere stubbornly. In respect of this mind, which is by nature fickle even towards objects cherished by it, I consider that its subjugation with a view to establishing it in the self which is of a character totally opposite to it, is very difficult like (the subjugation) of a strong contrary wind with such things as fans. What is meant is that the means for the subjugation of the mind should be described

श्रीमद्वाङ्मनाच—

असंशय महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

असंशयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।

वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

THE LORD SAID

35. Surely, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), the mind is hard to restraint and fickle. But, O son of Kuntī, it is brought under control by repeated practice and by freedom from attachment due to desire

36. It is My opinion that yoga is difficult to be attained by a person of uncontrolled mind; it can, however, be attained through (sustainable) means by him who strives for it and has a controllable mind.

There is no doubt that the mind is certainly hard to restrain because of its fickle nature. But still it can be overpowered with difficulty by the favourable disposition generated towards the self by repeated contemplation of (its) being a mind of auspicious qualities<sup>304</sup> and by freedom from desire brought on by discerning the possession of a host of evil qualities in what is other than the self. Yoga is indeed difficult to be attained even with the use of great force by one of uncontrolled *ātman*, that is, by one whose mind is unconquered. But this same yoga can be attained through suitable means by one who is striving

304. The auspicious qualities include, according to T' C, being eternal self-luminousness, bliss, freedom from control by *karma*, purity and the like

and whose *ātman* is controlled, that is, by one whose mind is conquered by (the discipline of) *karma* which has already been taught to be of the form of My worship and which includes knowledge within it.

Then, Arjuna asks (questions) in order to hear about the greatness, as it really is, of *yoga*—(a greatness) which has already been heard by him at the beginning in the statement, “Here there is no loss of the initial effort” (II 40). There indeed the greatness of *karma-yoga* was taught as inclusive of the knowledge of the self within it and as having *yoga* (or the vision of the self) for its culmination<sup>305</sup>. And this is really the greatness of *yoga* itself.

अर्जुन उवाच—

अयतिश्चन्द्रयोपेतो योगाञ्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं का गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥ ३७ ॥

कञ्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।

अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ ३८ ॥

एत मे सशय कृष्ण च्छेतुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।

त्वदन्य सशयस्यास्य च्छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥ ३९ ॥

37 O Kṛṣṇa, without attaining success in yoga what position does he reach—he who is possessed of faith, (but) is devoid of diligent exertion and has (in consequence) his mind drifting from yoga?

38 Without any firm stand (in worship and ritual for selfish ends), bewildered on the way leading to the brahman (or the self), and (thus) fallen from both (supports), does he not become annihilated, O mighty-armed, like a (piece of) broken cloud?

39 It is proper that You should cut off this doubt of mine<sup>306</sup> completely. Surely, other than You, there can in reason be no remover of this doubt.

305 Though II 40 has primary reference to a variety of *karma yoga* which does not have the knowledge of the self included within it and which requires to pass through *jñāna-yoga* before reaching the *yoga* of the self, there is no doubt that its culmination is the *yoga* of the self. Moreover, what is said in II 40 can be applied to the *karma-yoga* taught in Chapters III to V also.

306. Śrī Śaṅkara reads ‘*etat*’ for ‘*etam*’.

What position does he reach, who has undertaken *yoga* with faith, but who through insufficiency in diligent exertion in the form of steadfast practice, does not attain success in *yoga* and who has his mind drifting from *yoga*? Does he not get annihilated even as a small fragment of cloud broken off earlier from an extensive cloud, becomes annihilated in between without reaching another extensive cloud?

How is there falling off from both (supports)? He has no firm stand (and) is bewildered on the way leading to the self. He is without any firm stand on the sense that *karma* (or ritual and worship) which by itself constitutes the means for such things as *Svarga*, does not offer a firm basis to stand upon for a person who is free of attachment to fruits for it (i.e., *karma*) is the means for bringing about its own fruits (which he does not want) <sup>307</sup>. On the way to the self on which he has already started, he is bewildered, he has (through the rise in him of ignorance) strayed from that way. Does he then really get annihilated by his falling off from both supports, or does he not get annihilated? It is proper that You should cut it off completely, that is, (cut off completely) this doubt. Surely, there can in reason be no remover of this doubt, other than Yourself, who by Yourself always perceive directly all things simultaneously <sup>308</sup>.

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।

न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्गुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ ४० ॥

307 Ritual and worship, carried on for selfish purposes, help one to achieve them. But the *yogi* aiming at self-realisation performs them, giving up their fruits, while expending the same effort on them as one who seeks their results. If he fails in *yoga*, is he not worse off than the man who does not try *yoga*? This is Arjuna's doubt. Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that the question here refers to one who has fallen from both *karma yoga* and the path of *yoga*. The *Dvaita* view appears to be that he is one who loses both *Svarga* and *mokṣa*.

308 Phrases are here echoed from the opening verse of Nāthamuni's *Nyāya-tatva* 'Yo veti vṛgapat sarvaṁ pratyakṣena sadā svata', *Tam prapāmya Hariṁ śāstram Nyāyatattvam prachakṣmahe*. This may be rendered as "We shall expound the *śāstra* known as *Nyāya tatva*, after bowing to the Lord (Hari), who knows by Himself at all times through direct perception all things simultaneously." T. C. points out that the knowledge of the Lord is here differentiated from that of others in that it is not dependent on senses and such instruments, not dim and mediate like inference, not needing growth and development, not confined to a few things and not limited to certain times only.

## THE LORD SAID

40 *Ruin will not befall him either here (in this world) or there (in the next), O Pārtha (Arjuna)! For no one who does what is good, dear boy, will (ever) come to a sad fate*

Either here or there ruin will not befall one who had begun *yoga* with faith and has then fallen away from it. The meaning is that there is no ruin either in the form of failure to attain what is desired or in the form of *pratyavṛtṭi* which is the attainment of what is undesired—in the experience of enjoyments in the material world of *Svarga* and the like, and in the experience of the self. Hence none who performs *yoga* which has the character of being surpassingly good, can meet with a sad fate in the threefold division of time (i.e., the past, the present or the future)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains (here) how this will happen

प्राप्य पुण्यकृता लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीस्समा ।

शुचीना श्रीमता गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ ४१ ॥

41 *He that has fallen off from yoga is born again in a house of the pure and prosperous, after attaining the worlds of those who do meritorious deeds and living there for long-continued years*

Through the desire for whatever kinds of enjoyments this man had fallen off from *yoga*, he enjoys, by the greatness of his *yoga* alone, those kinds of highly auspicious enjoyments after attaining the worlds of those who do meritorious deeds, and dwelling there for long-continued years, that is, till his thirst for such enjoyments ends. Then, free of thirst for this enjoyment, the man who has fallen off at the initial stage of *yoga* is born, through the greatness of *yoga*, in the family of those who are pure and prosperous, that is, of those who are fit to undertake *yoga* <sup>309</sup>

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले महति धीमताम् ।

एतद्धि दुर्लभतर लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ ४२ ॥

309 Life for those in worlds of enjoyment will come to an end, not through exhaustion of *puṇya*, but though the extinction of desire. The purity of the families in which they are reborn helps them spiritually in the practice of *yoga*, while prosperity helps them materially.

42 Or else (he will be born) in a great family of yogins having wisdom That birth which is of this kind, that is, indeed, very difficult to obtain in this world.

If one who is ripe in *yoga* wavers from it, he will be born in a family of *yogins* having wisdom,<sup>310</sup> that is, of those who perform *yoga* and are themselves capable of giving instruction in *yoga*. Thus, these two kinds of births—in the family of those who are fit to practise *yoga* and in that of *yogins*—are difficult to get for ordinary men (who are interested only in the body and the material world) in the world. This (i.e., such a birth) indeed is achieved by the greatness of *yoga*.

तत्र त बुद्धिसयोग लभते पूर्वदेहिकम् ।

यतते च ततो भूयः ससिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३ ॥

पूर्वाम्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।

जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

43 There he recovers the association of that disposition of mind belonging to his previous embodiment and then, O Arjuna (Kurunandana), (he) endeavours again for complete success in *yoga*

44 For, even though lacking in self-control, he is carried away by the force of that same practice (of *yoga*) which he had before Even he who is merely desirous of knowing (the nature of) *yoga*, transcends the verbal *brahman*

There, in that birth (in the family either of those fit for *yoga* or of those practising and teaching *yoga*), he recovers the association of the very same disposition of mind in regard to *yoga* which he had in a previous embodiment Then he endeavours again for complete success (in *yoga*), like one who has slept and awakened He so endeavours as not to be overcome by obstacles This man who has fallen off from *yoga*, even though lacking in self-control, is carried away towards *yoga* alone by the force of that same practice which he had before, that is, by the earlier practice relating to *yoga* The meaning is that this greatness of *yoga* is well known<sup>311</sup>

310. Śrī Śaṅkara describes the *yogins* mentioned in this stanza as poor in worldly possessions Birth in their family is more difficult of attainment than birth in a family of prosperous *yogins*.

311. As in the cases of Ādi Bharata, Vidura and Bhiṣma (T. C.).



Even he who has not engaged himself in *yoga*, but has merely been desirous of knowing (the nature of) *yoga*, and then has had his mind straying away, gets once again the same desire to know (*yoga*) he then performs (the) *yoga* of which the initial step is taken with *karma-yoga* and (he), thereafter, transcends the verbal *brahman*<sup>312</sup> The verbal *brahman* (or the big thing which is describable by words) is the *brahman* which is capable of being spoken of by the words 'gods', 'men', 'earth', 'sky', '*Svarga*' etc —namely, the *prakṛti*. The meaning is that, becoming free from the bondage of the *prakṛti*, he attains the self which is incapable of being spoken of by the words, 'gods', 'men', etc, and which is the seat exclusively of knowledge and bliss

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी सशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परा गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

45 But, because of this, the yogin who puts forth effort with deliberate endeavour (to restrain the senses), becomes fully free from sins, and getting well accomplished (for *yoga*) in the course of many births, goes to the supreme goal

As the greatness of *yoga* is such, therefore the yogin who puts forth effort with deliberate endeavour (to restrain the senses) becomes fully free from sins through the accumulations of religious merit gathered in many births, and having become one who is well accomplished (for *yoga*) reaches certainly in the end the supreme goal (of the vision of the self), even though he has wavered

He (i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the superiority of the *yogin* in regard to all (others), on account of his being devoted to that object of human pursuit which excels (all others)

312. '*Śabda-brahman*', regarded as 'the *brahman* which consists of words', is understood by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'the fruit of the observance of works prescribed in the *Vedas*', and by Jayatīrtha, annotating Śrī Madhva's commentary on the *Gītā*, as 'the mandates and prohibitions enjoined by the *Vedas*'. T. C. thus sets out the points in favour of Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation '*Śabda-brahman*' cannot mean the Supreme *Brahman*, nor the self nor the *Vedas* because of its being transcended. Nor can it mean the rituals of the *Vedas* or their fruits, as this involves a secondary sense of the word, '*brahman*', which has to be further extended figuratively. Nor again is it the mere knowledge arising from words. Moreover, '*brahman*' is often used in the sense of '*prakṛti*', and the *prakṛti* can be transcended.

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

46 The yogin is superior to the performers of austere penances, and is considered to be superior even to those who possess (much) knowledge. The yogin is superior to the performers of religious rites also. Therefore, O Arjuna, do you become a yogin.

Whatever object of human pursuit is accomplished by mere austere penances, whatever by kinds of knowledge different from the knowledge of the self, and whatever by mere religious rites like the horse-sacrifice—by *yoga* being the means for a human objective higher than these, the *yogin* is superior to those who (merely) perform austere penances, to the men who possess (mere) knowledge and to the performers of (mere) religious rites.<sup>313</sup> Therefore, O Arjuna, do you become a *yogin*.

Thus has been described the vision of the self which has been taught in the teaching of Prajāpati,<sup>314</sup> and which constitutes a part of the supreme science (of the *Brahman*). Then He (Sri Kṛṣṇa) praises that supreme science.<sup>315</sup>

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ४७ ॥

47 He who, with his inner self directed to Me, has ardour and worships Me—he is deemed by Me the most accomplished, as compared with the yogins and also with all (others).

'*Yoginām*' in the genitive case has to be taken with the sense of the ablative. In the verses starting with "His self as existing in all beings" (VI 29), four kinds of *yogins* have been described. In

313 The *yogin* has also to go through austerities, possess knowledge and carry out religious rites. So he is differentiated from those who are content with mere austerities, with mere knowledge or with mere rituals (T C).

314. See Note 96.

315. The Lord is here conceived as having, out of His abounding grace, pointed out, on His own initiative, to Arjuna that there is a *yoga* superior to the *yoga* of self-realisation. A parallel often cited is the similar favour shown to Nārada by Sanatsumāra in *Chānd Uṣ* (VII 1). Vide the *Śrībhāṣya* (I. iii. 7) and the *Śrutaprahāṇa* *śā* thereon.

the case of the *yogin* who is intended to be referred to later, the use of the genitive for particularising one out of many is not applicable, on account of his not being included among them. In '*api sarveṣām*', the performers of austere penances and others (enumerated in the previous stanza) are denoted by the word, '*sarva*' (all). There, too, in accordance with the principle set forth, the sense of the ablative case is to be understood. The *yogin* who is intended to be spoken of is the most accomplished as compared with the *yogins* and also with (others)<sup>316</sup>. The meaning is that, in point of inferiority, as compared to him, there are no differences (of grade or quality) among the performers of austere penances and others (mentioned in the previous stanza) and among the *yogins* just as there are no differences (worth noting) among (individual) mustard seeds when compared with Mount Meru. Even though among the mustard seeds there exists the condition of being smaller or bigger in relation to one another, still, when compared with Meru, the description as being small and insignificant applies to all of them.

He is considered by Me to be the most accomplished who, with his inner self, that is, his mind, directed to Me, on account of his having, through My being exceedingly dear, a nature which cannot be sustained by anything else, who has ardour, that is, makes haste in applying himself to attaining Me on account of his being unable to endure being apart from Me even for a moment, because of My being very dear to him and who worships Me--worships, that is to say, serves with devotion, meditates on Me<sup>317</sup>.

(Me) whose sport it is to create, sustain and dissolve the whole universe, which is completely filled with diverse and countless objects of enjoyment, orders of beings that enjoy, means of enjoyment and places of enjoyment who, untouched by all blemishes without exception, am the treasurehouse of countless multitudes of auspicious qualities, each unbounded and unsurpassed, such as knowledge, strength,

316 Śrī Śaṅkara explains that the Lord esteems the *yogin* devoted to Vasudeva more highly than those devoted to Rudra, the sun god and other such divinities. Śrī Madhva quotes a *Garuḍa Purāṇa* verse almost to this effect. Jayatirtha suggests two classes of superior *yogins*—those who meditate on the Lord and those who meditate on Him with their minds exclusively directed to Him.

317 T C quotes the *Nighaṇṭu* "*Sevā bhaktirupādāh*"

sovereignty, valour, power and glory<sup>318</sup> whose divine form is the treasure-house of infinite qualities agreeable to and worthy of Me and each unsurpassed, such as brilliancy, grace, fragrance, tender softness and youthfulness which are unchangeable (lit. of one form), unthinkable, supernatural, miraculous, everlasting and faultless whose essential nature and characteristics cannot be measured by speech and mind who am the great shoreless ocean of each of mercy, condescension, motherly solicitude and magnanimity who am the refuge of all beings without exception, the distinctions among them remaining unconsidered who am the remover of the afflictions of those who bow down (to Me) who am the great ocean solely of motherly affection for all who take refuge with Me<sup>319</sup> who have made Myself capable of being seen by the eyes of all men who (still) have not given up My essential nature who have descended in the house of Vasudeva who (even in the state of incarnation) have made the entire world shine with (My) unbounded and unsurpassed glory and who have gratified and satisfied the entire universe with My own loveliness<sup>320</sup>

The meaning is that I, who by Myself alone perceive directly everything at all times as it is, consider him to be better than all (others mentioned earlier)

318 See Note 3

319. *Vātsalya* is mentioned again separately on account of its importance among the Lord's qualities.

320 *Sattvata-saṁbhāṣā* (II. 70), where the Lord's loveliness, resembling that of countless full moons, is described as gratifying the universe, is echoed here

## CHAPTER VII

In order to teach that which forms the means for the attainment of Nārāyaṇa, who is the Lord of Śrī, who forms the supreme goal of attainment, who is the Supreme *Brahman*, who is faultless, who is the sole cause of the entire universe, who is omniscient, who has become everything,<sup>321</sup> who wills the truth, and whose dominion is vast, (in order to teach that which forms the means of attainment), namely, His worship—the vision of the real nature of the individual self of the aspirant, which constitutes an element of that worship and which is accomplishable by the practice of *karma-yoga* preceded by knowledge of the self, has been taught in the first group of six chapters.<sup>322</sup>

Now in the middle group of six chapters, the nature of the Supreme Person who constitutes the Supreme *Brahman*, as also His worship which can be denoted by the word, '*bhakti*' (love and devotion) is expounded. The same teaching will be summed up later on in the verses beginning with "Man attains perfection by worshipping by his own duty Him from whom is the activity of all beings and by whom all this is pervaded" (XVIII. 46) and ending with "Having given up (egotism), the strength of internal impressions, pride, desire, anger, and possession of property), and being free from the sense of possession and tranquil (in the experience of the self) (and practising meditation), one becomes fitted for the state of the *brahman* (or the self in its pure state). Having realised the state of the *brahman* and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. The same to all beings, he attains supreme devotion for Me" (XVIII. 53-54).

It is however established in the texts of the *Vedānta*<sup>323</sup> that only the worship which has taken the form of devotion forms the means for attaining the Supreme Being. What has been taught as knowledge (*vedana*) in "Knowing Him alone, one reaches the state transcending death" (*Śvet Up* III 8), "He who thus knows Him becomes immortal here" (*Taitt Aran* III 12 7), and similar (*śruti*)

321. By being the Internal Controller of everything and having everything for His body. See XI. 40.

322. Vide *G S* 2

323. The argument that follows is set out at greater length in the *Śrībhāṣya* (I. 1 1). Vide *S B.* (I. pp. 14-24)

texts has the same meaning as (what is taught in) texts like, "Verily, my dear one, the Self has to be seen has to be meditated upon steadily" (*Brh Up* II 4 5), <sup>324</sup> "Let him worship the Self alone as the object to be attained" (*Brh Up*. I 4 15); "When the mind is pure, then remembrance (i.e., loving meditation) is firm, when (such memory is obtained, there is the loosening of all knots" (*Ck Up* VII. 26 2), and "When He is seen to whom all others are inferior, the knot of the heart is broken, doubts are all shattered, and all his (seer's) *karmas* perish" *Mund Up* II 2 8)

Because of this,<sup>325</sup> it may be made out that it (knowledge) is of the form of a succession of memories, has a character similar to that of direct perception, and can be denoted by the words, 'meditation' (*dhyāna*) and, 'worship' (*upāsana*)

Again, it is indeed decisively determined that what is denoted by the word, 'worship', is really the succession of memories which forms the cause of being chosen by the Supreme Self and which itself is inexpressibly dear on account of the object of remembrance being inexpressibly dear. This is made out from the qualification (given to the succession of memories) by (the text), "This Self cannot be gained by (reflection which results in) teaching the *Vedas*, nor by steady meditation, nor by largely 'hearing' the scriptures. He whom this (Self) chooses, by him He can be gained, and to him this

<sup>324</sup> In this scriptural text, the omitted phrases are "has to be heard, (*śrotavya*), has to be reflected upon (*mantavya*)". Only the portion dealing with the injunction is quoted 'hearing' and 'reflection' arise from causes other than a scriptural injunction—the former from the felt need to ascertain clearly the purport of the *Veda* by one who has learnt it and found it helpful in attaining desired objectives, and the latter from the wish to think over and retain firmly in the mind what has been taught. 'Seeing' and 'steady meditation' do not constitute two commandments. Both the *Chāndogya* and *Mundaka* texts quoted affirm the loosening or breaking of knots—one as a consequence of meditation and the other as a result of seeing. Thus it can be made out that the enjoined meditation is to be intensified so as to attain similarity with direct perception.

<sup>325</sup> *T. C.* notes four steps here in Śrī Rāmānuja's reasoning, two explicit and two implicit. (i) Worship (*upāsana*) is the means for salvation, not mere knowledge. (ii) The worship must have attained the form of devotion. (iii) Such worship is the sole means, and not along with works, which are merely helpful to it. (iv) The worship must have for its object the Supreme Being. The last two steps are implied.

Self reveals His form" (*Kaṭh. Up.* II 23, *Muṇḍ. Up.* III 2 3) <sup>326</sup>  
 It is this (succession of memories) which is called devotion (or *bhakti*),  
 as may be made out from passages like "Continuous meditation  
 attended with love is termed devotion (or *bhakti*)" (*Laṅgottara  
 Purāṇa*)

Hence (i.e., the knowledge which secures liberation being of  
 the form of loving devotion), identity of meaning becomes firmly  
 established between these two (texts): "He who thus knows Him  
 becomes immortal here. There is no other path for the attainment of  
 final release" (*Taitt. Ār.* III 12 7), and "Not through the *Vedas*,  
 nor through the practice of austerities, nor through the giving of gifts  
 nor through the performance of sacrifices, is it possible for Me to be  
 seen as you have seen Me. But through exclusive devotion, O Arjuna  
 it is possible really to know, see and enter into Me who am like this,  
 O harasser of foes" (*XI* 53 54) <sup>327</sup>

Here (in the middle group of six chapters), in the seventh chapter,  
 are taught the real nature of the Supreme Person who is worthy of  
 being worshipped, its obscuration (for worshippers) by (the veil of)  
 the *prakṛti*, taking trustful refuge in the Lord for its removal, the  
 various types of worshippers and the special excellence (among them)  
 of (the type represented by) the man of wisdom <sup>328</sup>

श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—

मय्यासक्तमना पार्थ योग युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।

असंशय समग्र मा यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १ ॥

326 The text quoted denies God-attainment to one who goes through  
 mere 'hearing', mere reflection and mere meditation. Loving meditation is  
 easily seen to be implied. There is difference of opinion among the followers  
 of Śrī Rāmānuja as to whether God chooses only those who love Him or makes  
 His chosen ones love Him. In the latter case, the succession of loving memories  
 is the cause of being chosen in the sense that it is evidence of the choice having  
 been made. T. C. takes the former view.

327 The Lord, that is, knowledge of Him, is enjoined as the means of  
 emancipation in *Taitt. Ār.*, while loving devotion is so enjoined in *B. G.* The  
 two texts are seen to be in harmony when the knowledge enjoined is taken to  
 be of the form of loving devotion.

328 Vide *G. S.* 11

## THE LORD SAYS

*1 With your mind attached to Me, having Me for your support and practising (My) yoga, how you will come to know Me fully and without any doubts, listen to that, O Arjuna (Pārtha)!*

With the mind attached to Me on account of its being turned towards Me, that is, with the mind very firmly bound to Me on account of (its) being of such a nature<sup>329</sup> as to break, as a result of My being the object of exceeding love, even at the very moment when there is separation from My essential nature, qualities, action and glory. having Me for support, that is, on account of his self being of such a nature as, without Me, to break (and thus) having Me for support, depending solely on Me practising My *yoga*, that is, being engaged in *yoga*—how you will come to know, that is, by such knowledge as is (to be) taught how you will come to know Me, who am become the object of *yoga*, without any doubts, having no doubts at all, and fully, in entirety—listen to that knowledge with an attentive mind

ज्ञान तेऽहं सविज्ञानम् इदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यत् ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

*2 I will speak to you fully of this knowledge along with information which makes it distinctive—(knowledge) knowing which, there remains no other thing here (in regard to Myself) that deserves to be known*

I will speak to you fully of this knowledge having Me for its object, along with information which makes it distinctive. The information which makes (this knowledge) distinctive (or *vyñāna*) is knowledge having for its object (My) distinctive form<sup>330</sup> How I am different from the collection of all things, animate as well as inanimate, other than Myself on account of My being opposed to all that is evil and endowed with the infinitely great glory of countless

329. There seem to be two readings for the original of what has been translated as 'nature'—'svabhāva' and 'svarūpa'.

330 *Vyñāna* is taken to be differentiating knowledge, that is, knowledge of the characteristics which differentiate the Lord from all other things whatsoever. It is not *nididhyāsana* or steady meditation which in *Advaita* is subordinate to the saving knowledge of oneness between the self and the Absolute. Śrī Śaṅkara glosses *vyñāna* as 'knowledge combined with one's own experience'.



multitudes of unbounded, unsurpassed, auspicious qualities of all kinds,—along with the knowledge about this differentiation, I will speak about the knowledge having My essential nature as its object. Why say much? (I will teach you) that knowledge after knowing which no other thing remains to be known again in regard to Myself

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) says that this knowledge which is to be taught, is such as is difficult to be obtained

मनुष्याणा सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

यततामपि सिद्धाना कश्चिन्मा वेत्ति तत्त्वत ॥ ३ ॥

3 Among thousands of men, some one (only) endeavours till the attainment of success (in yoga). And even among those who strive till the attainment of success (in yoga), some one (only) knows Me (and among those who know Me some one only knows Me) in reality

'Men' (in this context) means those who are qualified for observing the injunctions of the 'śāstras'. Among thousands of them only some one endeavours till the attainment of success (in yoga). Among thousands who endeavour till the attainment of success (in yoga),<sup>331</sup> some one only, knowing Me, endeavours with a view to gain success from Me. Among thousands of those who know Me, only some one knows Me in reality, as I am. The purport is that none whatever (knows Me thus)<sup>332</sup>. For He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will later on say, "This high-souled man is very rarely to be found" (VII 19) and "But Me none knows" (VII 26)

भूमिरापोऽजलो वायुः ख मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।

बहक्कार इतीय मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४ ॥

4 Earth, water, fire, ether, manas, buddhi (or the principle called mahat) and also ahaṁkāra (or the principle of egotism)—this prakṛti, thus divided into eight (principles), is Mine

331 Śrī Śaṅkara understands all who strive for mokṣa to be siddhas, those who have attained perfection.

332. The purport is that only a very few know Him thus.

Know that the *prakṛti* (or material cause)<sup>333</sup> of this universe which exists in the form of varied and limitless objects of enjoyment, means of enjoyment and places of enjoyment, and which is divided eightfold in the forms of earth, water, fire, air, ether and such other things<sup>334</sup> having smell and other characteristic attributes, in the forms of *manas* and such other organs of sense, and in the forms of the principles, *māhat* and *ahankāra*<sup>335</sup>—(know that this *prakṛti*) belongs to Me

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्या प्रकृति विद्धि मे पराम् ।

जीवभूता महाबाहो यदेद वार्यते जगत् ॥ ५ ॥

5 This is (My) lower (*prakṛti*) But know, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), that which is other than this (lower one), which is life-constituting, and by which this universe is sustained, to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me.

This is My lower *prakṛti* But know the *prakṛti* of Mine which is different from this, that is, whose nature makes it of a different kind altogether from this inanimate (lower) *prakṛti*, forming the object of enjoyment to animate beings which endowed with life,<sup>336</sup> which is higher, that is, is pre-eminent (relatively to the lower *prakṛti*) as its (i.e., the lower *prakṛti*'s) enjoyer which is of the form of the individual self (know this as the higher *prakṛti* of Mine) by which the whole of this non-intelligent (material) universe is sustained

333 'Prakṛti' here may mean the material cause of the things in the world, or the primordial *prakṛti* whose evolutes are the eight things mentioned (T C)

334. The mention of 'and such other things' after 'ether' is a reference to the *tan mātras* (T C) Śrī Śāṅkara understands the eight forms of the *prakṛti* to be the five *tan mātras*, *ahankāra* which is the cause of *manas* and is referred to as *manas*, *māhat* which is the cause of *ahankāra* and is referred to as *buddhi* and *avyakta* which is the primal cause and referred to as *ahankāra*

335 In this Śāṅkhyā chain of the evolution of the universe, *māhat* is that evolved condition of matter in which it is first made manifest and able to produce the material things making up the universe *Ahankāra* in which the tendency for individualisation in matter appears for the first time, evolves from *māhat*

336. Śrī Madhva takes the higher *prakṛti* to be Śrī who is of the form of consciousness.

एतच्चोनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगत प्रभव प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६ ॥

6 Bear in mind that all beings have these for the source of their birth I am the (place of) origin as well as the (place) of dissolution of the whole universe

Bear in mind that all beings, who have as their source of birth these two *prakṛtis* of Mine, having the combined forms of the intelligent soul and non-intelligent matter, who range from Brahman (the four-faced creator) to a clump of grass, who exist in gradations of high and low, and in whom the intelligent soul and the non-intelligent matter are mixed together— (know them all) to be Mine. Because they have the sources of birth in My two *prakṛtis*, therefore, indeed they are Mine. That being so, bear in mind that because the entire universe has its source of birth in the two *prakṛtis*, because these two indeed have their source of birth in Me, and belong to Me, therefore I only am the (place of) origin of the entire universe, that I alone am the (place of) dissolution, and that I alone am its proprietor.

It is established in the *Śruti*s and *Smṛti*s that these two, *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* (matter and soul) which constitute the aggregate of (all) the intelligent and non-intelligent beings, have the Supreme Person for their source. For to this effect are the following *Śruti* and *Smṛti* texts and many others of the same kind. "The principle of the *mahat* is absorbed into the *avyakta*, the *avyakta* is absorbed into the *akṣara*. The *akṣara* is absorbed into the *tamas*. And the *tamas* becomes one with the Supreme Lord" (*Sub Up II*)<sup>337</sup> "O sage, separate from the

337 This text describes the several stages of involution leading to *pralaya* or the dissolution of the universe. The following note from the translation of the *Śrībhāṣya* by Prof M Rangacharya and M B Varadaraja Iyengar (Vol I, Note 185, p 172) clearly explains the passage "Four different (ultimate) states of the *prakṛti* or Nature are mentioned in *Sub Up II*. In its primary undifferentiated state, it is called the *Avibhaktā tamas*; in its first differentiated state, it is called the *Vibhaktā tamas*; in its next state, it is called the *ākṣara* in which even the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are not seen to be differentiated and in which it is also said to be promiscuously mixed up with the individual self, in its last stage, it is called the *Avyakta* in which the differentiation of the three *guṇas* begins to take place." The *Tamas* mentioned above in the passage from the *Sub Up* is conceived to be the *Vibhaktā-tamas*. It is absorbed in the *Avibhaktā-tamas*, which is here identified with the Supreme Lord, because it forms His body. For 'mahat' and 'ākṣara', see Note 335.

form of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord, (even in the state of *pralaya*) are the two forms, *pradhāna* and *puruṣa* (primordial matter and soul)" (V P.I 2 24) and "The *prakṛti* which has been spoken of by me as having a nature both manifest and unmanifest, and the *puruṣa* (or the self) are both of them absorbed into the Supreme Self And the Supreme Self is the support of all, and is the Supreme Lord He is sung under the name of Viṣṇu in the *Vedas* and in the *Vedānta* " (V P VI 4. 39 & 40)

मत् परतर नान्यत् किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।

7 (Thus), other than Myself, there is nothing whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (*Dhananāṣṭhaya*)

In the manner in which I am the highest on account of being the cause and the proprietor, as the cause of both the *prakṛtis* which are the causes of everything and as the proprietor of even the intelligent soul which is the proprietor of all in sentient things—in the same way I am the supreme through the possession of knowledge, power, strength and such other qualities There is, indeed, none other than Me, none different from Me and possessed of knowledge, strength and other qualities who is superior

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ ७ ॥

7 . Like collections of gems on a string, the whole of this (universe) is strung on Me.

The aggregate of all the intelligent and non-intelligent things which form My body both in their causal state and in their state as effect, are like collections of gems on a string, strung on Me who remain as their Self. that is, they find their rest and support (in Me) <sup>338</sup>

And it is established that the universe and the *Brahman* exist in the relationship of the body and the soul in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmana*

<sup>338</sup> The simile of the thread makes clear how One is the support of all things, how He penetrates them all and remains hidden, and how He is free from dependence on the *prakṛti* and other things which are all dependent on Him. The expression, 'are strung', is interpreted in the sense of finding rest and support in order to prevent any misunderstanding to the effect that, as in the case of the thread, so also in the case of the Lord, there is no external pervasion. (T. C.)

(*see*, *Brh Up* III 7) and similar *śruti* texts, like "He whose body is the earth" (*Brh Up* III 7 3), "He whose body is the self" (*Mādh Brh Up* III 7 22), and "He is the inner soul of all beings, He is devoid of evil, He is the Lord in the Highest Heaven, He is the one Nārāyaṇa" (*Sub Up* VII) <sup>339</sup>

Therefore, as everything forms the body of the Supreme Person and is only a mode of the Supreme Person who is its Self, therefore the Supreme Person alone exists as having all things as modes. Hence, by all words His denotation alone is effected. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here teaches this by equating Him with such and such (things)

रसोज्ज्वलम्पु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।

प्रणवस्सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुष नृषु ॥ ८ ॥

पुष्पो गन्ध पृथिव्या च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।

जीवन सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥ ९ ॥

बीज मा सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।

बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १० ॥

बल बलवता चाह कामरागविवर्जितम् ।

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११ ॥

8 I am the savour in the waters, O Arjuna (Kauṁteya) I am the luminosity in the sun and the moon, the praṇava (or the syllable Om) in all the Vedas, sound in the ether of space and manliness in men

9 I am the fragrant smell in the (element) earth and the heat in the fire I am the life-giving principle in all beings and the austerity in those who practise austerities

10 Know Me, O Arjuna (Pārtha), as the everlasting seed of all beings I am the intelligence of the intelligent and the heroism of the heroic

11 In relation to those who are possessed of strength, I (am) (their) strength as dissociated from desire and attachment. And in all beings I am, O Arjuna (Bharatarṣabha), that kind of desire which is not opposed to righteousness

339 The *Sub Up.* text refers to Nārāyaṇa and also indicates the Lord's freedom from imperfection in spite of being the inner soul of all. *Śvet Up* III. 9 may be among the other texts indicated.

All these distinctive things are born from Me alone<sup>340</sup> They are dependent on Me and as being My body, they are existent in Me alone Therefore, I alone exist having them for My modes

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि नत्त्वह तेषु ते मयि ॥ १२ ॥

*12. Those things which are sātṭvika, those which are rājasa and those which are tāmasa, understand them to have proceeded from Me But I am not in them, they are in Me*

Why, indeed, should this be stated with the help of particular examples? Whatever things exist in the world as *sātṭvika*, *rājasa* or *tāmasa* things and in the form of bodies, senses, objects of enjoyment and their several causes, understand them all to have proceeded from Me alone, and that they abide in Me alone on account of their being My body<sup>341</sup> But I am not in them That is, I do not at all at any time depend for My existence on them Elsewhere (that is, in the case of other beings), though the body depends for its existence on the self, still there is help for the existence of the self by the body To Me, however, there is no help at all of that kind by them The meaning is that mere sport is the purpose (served by them in relation to Me)

340 The 'grammatical equations' given in these verses are explained on the basis that the denotation of words denoting modes extends to the possessors of the modes For instance, savour is a distinguishing attribute and mode of water Therefore, it denotes water Again, water is a part of material Nature which forms the body, and hence is a mode, of God Therefore, the denotation of savour extends further to God Himself The significance of these equations is that God is believed to operate in relation to these various qualities and things and persons in a way in which none else can operate

Śrī Śaṅkara explains all the equations on the analogy of the statement that the universe is strung on the Lord like gems on a string On the Lord as savour water is strung Śrī Madhva explains that the Lord determines the essence and nature of the savour in the water

In a general sense, the statements of identity seem to indicate that the value, worth and distinctive existence of everything are due to the Lord

341. The locative (in 'They are in Me') indicates that He, besides being the cause of all, has them dependent on Him as constituting His body This includes His control over all things due to the relationship established by His being equated to them (T C)

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिस्तर्बमिदं जगत् ।

मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

13 The whole of this world is deluded by these three kinds of existent things characterised by the *gunas* (of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), and does not recognise Me as the Unchangeable (Being) who is above them

Now, in this manner, the whole universe which consists of animate and inanimate things, and which belongs to Me, proceeds from time to time from Me only and is (in due course) absorbed in Me. It abides in Me alone. It forms My body and has Me for its Self. Thus, both in the causal state and in the condition as effect, it is I who have all things for My modes on account of all things constituting My body. Therefore, I alone with all the modes am superior (to all other things) by being the cause (of all things), by being the proprietor, and by reason of a multitude of countless auspicious qualities like knowledge etc. Other than Myself there is none superior by reason of any crowding together of auspicious qualities.

Being thus <sup>342</sup> I am superior to the three kinds of things made up of the qualities as *sāttvika*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa*—superior through My uncommon auspicious qualities having for their modes the enjoyableness of the various things (animate and inanimate, natural and supernatural) <sup>343</sup> I am the highest, and unchangeable, that is, ever the same in form. Even though I am so, this world (of experiencing selves) which is in the form of gods, animals, men and inanimate

342 What is other than the Lord is mixed up with misery, liable to destruction and capable of being surpassed. In contrast, He (in His nature and form) is the opposite of all that is evil, is unsurpassed bliss, and is eternal. By being the cause. He is the father and desirous of promoting the welfare of all, being the proprietor, He regards the redemption of those who are His property as a gain unto Himself, being omniscient and omnipotent. He depends on none for attaining what is desirable or keeping out what is undesirable (T ')

343 The enjoyableness of all things is included in the Lord as the depression made by a hoof is included in the sea. The Lord is supreme by reason of the multitude of His qualities like knowledge and power, by reason of the supernatural elements and qualities making up His form which are different from the mundane counterparts and by reason of the mundane sound and such things denoting the Lord ultimately and hence capable of being regarded as almost supernatural. In each case, the enjoyableness becomes boundless and unsurpassed to Him (T ')

things, is deluded by those same three kinds of things which are made of the *gunas*, are inferior, perish in a moment and are in the form of bodies, senses and objects of enjoyment in accordance with previous *karmas*—(this world) does not know Me to be so

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here answers the question "How does the entire set of experiencers (i.e., the selves) consider as enjoyable things which are exceedingly inferior, made up of the *gunas* and impermanent, while You exist—You who are in Yourself unbounded excellence in bliss, who are eternal, of one unchangeable form and the highest by reason of those (qualities) which have for modes the enjoyableness of wordly objects?"

देवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

14 For this *māyā* of Mine made of the three *gunas*, for purposes of play, is difficult to get over

This *māyā* of Mine is made up of the *gunas*, that is, is made up of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Because it is *dāvi*, made by Me the player (*devana*),<sup>344</sup> that is, while engaged in sport—therefore, it is *duratyayā*,<sup>345</sup> hard to get over by all

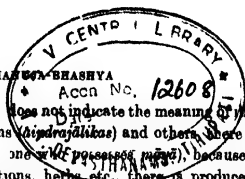
This can be denoted by the word, , *māyā* ', like the magic weapons of *Astras* and *Rākṣasas*, on account of (its) having the power of producing wonderful results. As for example, in passages like the following "Then, the excellent discus, *Sudarśana*, directed by the Lord to his (i.e., *Prahlāda*'s) protection, appeared garlanded in fire. The thousand *māyās* (or wonderfully created weapons) of *Śambara* were destroyed, one after another by that quickly moving (discus), protecting the body of the body" (*V P I 19 19-20*)<sup>346</sup>

344 ' *Dāvi* ' is here derived from the root, ' *dā* ', to play, through ' *deva* ' taken as ' one who plays '.

345 ' *Duratyaya* ' has to be explained because it may also mean ' difficult to destroy ' (*T U* )

346 The reference is to *Prahlāda*, the pious boy, whose impious father, *Hiranyakaśipu*, tried to kill him for being devoted to God. Once *Hiranyakaśipu* sent *Śambara* to kill *Prahlāda* with his *māyās* or wonderful weapons. The Lord's divine discus destroyed the weapons of *Śambara*. Later, *Hiranyakaśipu* himself was killed by the Lord, incarnating as *Narasimha* or the man lion.





Hence the word, 'māyā' does not indicate the meaning of illusion. Even in the case of magicians (*śāṇḍilyāṇḍīkās*) and others, there is the use of the word, 'māyāvin' one who possesses māyā, because, with the help of certain incantations, herbs etc., there is produced real knowledge only, though it has for its object an unreal thing.<sup>347</sup> Accordingly, there 'māyā' is merely the incantations, herbs etc. Because the meaning of a word should be one only, harmonising with usage in all contexts, the use of the word, 'māyā', there in respect of unreal, things is, as in the statement, "The cots shriek," figurative, having reference to the knowledge of the effects of māyā

This māyā of the Lord which is essentially real and which is made up of the *gunas*, is alone taught in passages like "Understand then māyā to be the *prakṛti* and the Possessor of the māyā to be the Great Lord" (*Śvet Up* IV 10). Its function is to hide the essential nature of the Lord and to create the state of mind that its own essential nature is enjoyable. Hence, the entire universe, deluded by the māyā (or the *prakṛti*) belonging to the Lord, does not understand the Lord to be of the nature of bliss unbounded in excellence.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) points out the way to get free of the māyā

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेता तरन्ति ते ॥ १४ ॥

14 Those who take refuge with Me entirely, they cross beyond this māyā

Those who take refuge with Me alone—(Me) who will the truth, who have the highest mercy, and who am the refuge of all beings without exception and without regard to their particular qualities,

347 The point here is that 'māyā' never means illusion. The māyā of Śaṁbara, destroyed by the divine discus, could not have been illusions. Those who practise *śāṇḍilyāṇḍī* or illusionist magic create real knowledge in the minds of the spectators, even though the object of the knowledge is unreal. *T C* refers to the minor expedients of political policy known as *śāṇḍilyāṇḍī* and māyā. Of these two artifices, māyā transforms a thing into something different from what it is, while *śāṇḍilyāṇḍī* makes a thing appear different. Here, too, 'māyā' means something real. In consonance with the usage in all other contexts, we must hold that the magician is called the possessor of māyā because of the incantations and herbs he uses. They are māyās, real things having the power of producing wonderful effects. If we take māyā to mean illusion in this case, we cannot account for its use to denote the real weapons of Śaṁbara and others.

they cross over this *māyā* of Mine, which is made up of the *gunas*. The meaning is: "They worship<sup>348</sup> Me alone, giving up the *māyā*."

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here explains why all men do not take refuge in the Lord, so as to be led on to the worship of the Lord.

न मा कुङ्कतिनो मूढा प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमा ।

माययाऽपहृतज्ञाना आसुर भावमाश्रिता ॥ १५ ॥

15 Fools, the worst of men, those persons whose knowledge is removed by *māyā* and those who are subject to a demoniacal nature—all these evil-doers do not seek refuge in Me.

Evil-doers, that is, men who commit sins, do not seek refuge in Me. They are of four kinds,<sup>349</sup> according to differences in their evil deeds—fools, the worst of men, those persons whose knowledge has been removed by *māyā* and those who are subject to a demoniacal nature. Fools are those who have perverted knowledge: they consider the self which, in the manner stated earlier, finds its sole delight in dependence on the Lord, and (also similarly) the whole class of enjoyable objects as their property. The worst of men are those who are incapable of being devoted to Me, although My essential nature is known in general terms (to them). Those persons whose knowledge is removed by *māyā* are those in whose case knowledge already existent about Me and about My glory is removed by deceitful arguments making it out to be inconsistent and impossible: they are so called. (Then there are) those who are subject to a demoniacal nature. They in whose case knowledge about Myself and My glory, gained thoroughly, gives rise only to hatred towards Me—they are subject to a demoniacal nature. (Among these four classes) those who come (to be mentioned) later and later are more and more sinful (i.e., they are mentioned in the ascending order of sinfulness).<sup>350</sup>

348 The *prapatti* mentioned here is an element of *upāsana* (T' C).

349 Four kinds of evil-doers are to be understood here, on analogy with the four kinds of devotees mentioned in the next verse (T' C). Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva do not adopt this classification.

350 The greater the knowledge, the greater the sinfulness (T' C).

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मा जनास्सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६ ॥

16 Four kinds of men of good karma become devoted to Me, O Arjuna—the man in affliction, the man who wishes to procure knowledge, the man who is desirous of acquiring wealth and the man of wisdom, O Arjuna (*Bharatarishabha*)!

Men of good *karma*, that is, men who have a store of meritorious *karma*, after taking refuge in Me (to overcome the *prakṛti*), worship Me alone. They too are of four kinds in accordance with differences in their good deeds. They are higher and higher in an ascending order by reason of the (relative) greatness of their good deeds and the differences in their knowledge (i.e., in the desires prompting them).

The afflicted man is one who has no honourable position, dispossessed of wealth, he desires to attain it again. He who is desirous of acquiring wealth is one who longs for wealth, not having attained it before. Between these two (the afflicted man and the seeker for wealth) the difference is only nominal: the differentiating qualification (which ranks both of them in a single class) is one only (in regard to them both) as it relates to the wealth (they seek)<sup>351</sup>. The man who wishes to procure knowledge is one who desires to realise the real nature of the self, in a state of separation from the *prakṛti*. He is described as one who wishes to procure knowledge, because knowledge alone is his essential nature<sup>352</sup>. And the man of wisdom is he who knows that it is the essential nature of the self to find joy solely in dependence on the Lord, as taught in the passage beginning with "But know that which is other than this (lower one) to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me" (VII 5). Without concluding (his quest) at the self by itself in a state of separation from the *prakṛti* and desiring to attain the Lord, he deems the Lord alone as the highest object of attainment.

351 The four classes of devotees are reduced to three, presumably because there can only be three supreme goals, corresponding to the three ultimate principles of the universe—*achit* (matter), *chit* (the individual soul) and *īśvara* (the Lord).

352. The knowledge sought by the *jyātsu* may be taken to be the self which is a mass of knowledge, or, as the *T. C.* puts it, the experience of the self in its pure state.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्तः एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

*17 Among them, the man of wisdom, being always attached (to Me) and also single-minded in (his) devotion, is the best. For I am inexpressibly dear to the man of wisdom and he too is dear to Me*

Among them, the man of wisdom is the best. Why? (Because) he is always attached (to Me) and is single-minded in (his) devotion. For to the man of wisdom, to whom I am the sole object of attainment, connection with (i.e., meditation on) Me is eternal. But to others, meditation on Me is only until the attainment of their desire. So also, for the man of wisdom, there is devotion to Me only. But in the case of others, there is devotion to the subject of their desire and to Me as the means of attainment therefor. Therefore, he alone (i.e., the man of wisdom) is the best.

Further, I am indeed inexpressibly dear to the man of wisdom. Here (in 'atyartha') the word, 'artha', denotes what can be expressed. The meaning is that even I, who am omniscient and omnipotent, cannot express how I am dear to the sage, because there is no measure of 'thus much' to being dear. As has been said in the case of Prahlāda, the most pre-eminent among the men of wisdom, "But he with his mind absorbed in Kṛṣṇa,<sup>353</sup> while being bitten by great serpents, did not know his body, feeling only the rapture of remembering Him" (VP I 17-39)—in the same way he too is dear to Me.<sup>354</sup>

उदारास्सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितस्स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमा गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

<sup>353.</sup> Prahlāda was sought to be killed by his father with the help of poisonous snakes. As Śrī Kṛṣṇa belongs to a much later period than Prahlāda, the 'Kṛṣṇa' in whom his mind is absorbed must be God in a general sense. A suggested etymological meaning for 'Kṛṣṇa' in the MB (V 69-5) is 'he who brings joy to dwellers on earth'.

<sup>354.</sup> It has been suggested here that the Lord's love for the man of wisdom is inexpressible, even as his love for the Lord is. But why does the Lord fail to mention this explicitly? One view referred to by TC is that the Lord feels that He is after all only reciprocating the love of the devotee. Some teachers have put forward the view that the Lord's love, with His infinite capacity for loving, must be far greater than that of the man of wisdom.

18. *All these are indeed noble, but My conviction is that the man of wisdom is (My) Self For with dedicated self, he is devoted exclusively to Me as the highest goal.*

In that they worship Me alone, all these indeed are noble, that is, magnanimous For those who receive from Me anything however trifling, to Me, they are the donors of everything that they possess. But My conviction<sup>355</sup> is that the man of wisdom is (My) very self. I regard Myself as depending on him for My support and sustenance. Why is it so? Because this man holds Me to be the highest goal, finding it impossible to support himself without Me, therefore it is not possible for Me also to maintain Myself without him Thus he is indeed Myself<sup>356</sup>

बहुना जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मा प्रपद्यते ।

वासुदेवस्सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभ ॥ १९ ॥

19 *At the conclusion of many births the man of wisdom resorts to Me, holding that Vāsudeva is everything This high-souled man is very hard to find*

This is the fruit of auspicious births reckoned by no small number—namely, taking refuge with Me, after acquiring knowledge of the real nature of the self as finding its sole joy in dependence on Me. Moreover, at the conclusion of, that is, after the completion of many births, that is, auspicious births, one becomes possessed of the knowledge, “I have my sole joy in being dependent on Vāsudeva I am such that my essential nature, continuance and activities are under His control. He is superior (to all others) by reason of His countless multitudes of auspicious qualities” Then, he takes refuge with Me; that is, he meditates on Me, holding, “Vāsudeva alone is my highest

355 T. C. notices a reading, ‘*mataḥ*’ for ‘*matarḥ*’, in the first line of VII 18

356 T. C. points out that as there cannot possibly be identity between the Lord and the man of wisdom the statement of identity has to be construed as an expression of the intense love felt by the Lord for this devotee The Lord is deemed as saying “Whatever the *Vedānta* may hold, it is My settled conviction that the man of wisdom is My very self” Only persons whose hearts beat in unison can understand the Lord’s conviction Thus, while all the other classes of devotees merely contribute to the glory of the Lord, the man of wisdom sustains Him in His essential nature.

goal and also the means (for its attainment), And whatever else remains as (mere) desire in the mind, He alone is all that to me " This high-souled man, that is, high-minded man, is hard to find. It is very hard, indeed, to discover him in this world.

Only this is the meaning of the declaration that Vāsudeva is all,<sup>357</sup> on account of this topic having been begun with the statements, " For I am inexpressibly dear to the man of wisdom " (VII 17), and " For with dedicated self, he is devoted exclusively to Me as the highest goal " (VII 18). And the man (referred to here as) possessed of knowledge is indeed of the characteristics given here, because of his having the qualities of the man of wisdom described earlier.

For it has been taught that the two *prakṛti*s, the animate and the inanimate, have their sole delight in dependence on the Supreme Person in the verses beginning with " Earth, water," (VII 4) and ending with " *Ahaṅkāra* -this *prakṛti*, thus divided into eight (principles), is Mine. This is (My) lower (*prakṛti*). But know that which is other than this (lower one), and which is life-constituting, to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me " (VII 4-5). In the passage beginning from " I am the (place of) origin as well as the (place of) dissolution of the whole universe. (Thus), other than Myself, there is nothing whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (*Dharmāñjaya*) " (VII 6-7), and ending with " Those things which are *sātvika*, those which are *rājasa* and those which are *tāmasa*, understand them to have proceeded from Me. But I am not in them. They are in Me " (VII 12), it has been taught that the two *prakṛti*s both in their causal state and in their state as effect are such that their essential nature, continued existence and activities are under the control of the Supreme Person and that the Supreme Person is superior to everything because of all His modes. Hence he alone (who holds Vāsudeva to be everything) is here mentioned as the man of wisdom.

357 Śrī Śaṅkara explains that Vāsudeva is the Self of all. The *Drashtas* interpret the statement of identity to mean that " Vāsudeva is the cause of the existence, etc., of everything " or, taking ' *śarva* ' to mean ' perfect ', " Vāsudeva is the absolutely Perfect Being " (See S. Subba Rau's English rendering of the *Gītā* according to Śrī Madhva). T. C. points out that the equation of all things with Vāsudeva cannot rest on sublation (as when a pillar mistaken in the dark for a thief is later discovered to be only a pillar), superimposition or absolute identity. Moreover, the context suggests something other than the view that Vāsudeva is all things because He has all things for His body.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to explain the difficulty of finding this man of wisdom

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञाना. प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।

त तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियतास्त्वया ॥ २० ॥

20 Bound down by their own nature, such as have their knowledge stolen away by various desires, resort to other gods, adopting the several religious disciplines (required)

All worldly men, indeed, are bound down, that is, are eternally linked with their own nature, with the subtle impressions (of their previous *karmas*) relating to things constituted of the *guṇas*. Their knowledge about My essential nature is stolen away by various *kāmas*, that is, objects of desire, which are in accordance with the subtle impressions of the *karmas* (of these persons) and which are made of the *guṇas*. For the sake of fulfilling these various kinds of desires, they resort to, that is, seek and worship other gods, who are different from Me, such as Indra and others, by themselves,<sup>358</sup> adopting the several disciplines (required), that is practising the several rites which are specially required for the propitiation of these particular gods.

यो यो या या तनु भक्तः श्रद्धयाऽर्चितुमिच्छति ।

तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 Whichever devotee desires to worship with faith whatever manifestation (of Mine)—in relation to every such devotee, I make that same faith of his unshakable and firm.

These gods also are My manifestations,<sup>359</sup> as taught in *Śruti* texts like "He who, dwelling in the sun, whom the sun does not know, whose body is the sun" (*Bṛh Up.* III. 7. 9) Whichever devotee desires to worship with faith whatever manifestation of Mine, such as the sun, even though not knowing (these gods) to be My manifestations, I consider this faith to relate to My manifestations, even

358. This refutes the view that the desires mentioned here refer to those of the first three classes of devotees (*T. C.*).

359. *T. C.* says that this is different from the view that there is only one Self and that gods like the sun have no separate individual selves, but are like the incarnations of the one Lord.

though he is ignorant of it, and make that same faith of his unshakable and firm, that is, free from interruptions.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान् मयैव बिहितान् हि तान् ॥ २२ ॥

22. In association with that faith, he attempts the worship of that (manifestation) and thence obtains the objects of (his) desire, they are in fact bestowed by Me alone

He, in association with that uninterrupted faith, attempts (i.e., performs) the worship of Indra and other gods. Thence, that is, from the worship of Indra and other gods who are My manifestations, he obtains indeed the objects of desire covered by him, which are bestowed by Me alone. Even though he does not know at the time of worship that gods like Indra, who are objects of worship, are only My manifestations and that worshipping them is My worship—still, because this worship is in truth My worship, I alone bestow what is desired for by the worshiper <sup>360</sup>

अन्तवत् फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।

देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ २३ ॥

23. However, in relation to such (persons) whose intelligence is directed towards the mean (gods and results), this fruit (of their worship) happens to be finite. The worshippers of the gods go to the gods, and those who are devoted to Me come even unto Me

In the case of those men whose intelligence is directed towards the mean, that is, whose powers of comprehension are slight and who worship only Indra and other such gods, this fruit of their worship

360. 'Tasyārādhanam' may be split up as (i) 'tasya ārādhanam' or (ii) 'tasyāḥ rādhanam'. In the former case, 'tasya', the genitive singular of the third personal pronoun, is in the masculine gender. It cannot refer to 'tans' or 'devatā', both of which are feminine. 'Dera' may be understood as the equivalent of these, and the pronoun can refer to it. In the latter case, the pronoun is feminine, but the word following it is rarely used. Śrī Śaṅkara explains "tasya devatātanūṣṭhārādhanam". But no grammatical notes are given. In the second line of the verse, combining 'hita' into the single word, 'hita', though possible, is disapproved of by Śrī Śaṅkara.



is mean and also finite <sup>361</sup> Why? The worshippers of the gods go to the gods—because their worshippers go to the gods like Indra. And Indra and others are indeed of finite enjoyments, and they live only for a specified length of time. Therefore those who attain equality of enjoyments with them <sup>362</sup> slip down along with them (when their worlds are involved in dissolution), but My devotees, knowing that these works of theirs are of the nature of My worship and giving up attachment to finite results, attain Me, having for their sole purpose pleasing Me. That is, they do not return again (to the circuit of births and deaths). For He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches later “But, after attaining Me, O Kāmyāya, there is no rebirth” (VIII 16) <sup>363</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to state “But others (i.e., those who worship other gods) make useless even My incarnations among men and other beings, taken so that I may be the refuge of all”

अव्यक्त व्यक्तिमापन्न मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धय ।

पर भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

24 Not knowing My transcendent state, which is imperishable and unsurpassed, those who are wanting in intelligence think of Me as an unmanifest thing (i.e., individual self) which has obtained a manifest form (in a human embodiment)

Persons wanting in intelligence do not know My transcendent state which is imperishable and unsurpassed that is, they do not know that I who am worshipped by all rites, who am the lord of all, and whose essential nature and attributes are not capable of definition by speech and mind, have incarnated as the son of Vasudeva without giving up My true character, by reason of the highest mercy and maternal solicitude for those that resort to Me and so that I may be the refuge of all. They regard Me as being like a prince of this world,

361 Śrī Śaṅkara appears to take the first line as consisting of two sentences

362 ‘*Sāyujyam*’ is sometimes used in the sense of ‘union so as to become one’ or ‘absorption’. Here it is explained by T. C. as ‘having equality of enjoyments’ it may mean also ‘having equality of attributes’

363 T. C. quotes Nārāyaṇa ārya to the effect that even those devotees of the Lord who desire from Him other things than *moḷa* will progress spiritually and in due course attain final emancipation

who was, prior to the present time, unmanifest and who, having now attained a particular birth by the force of *karma*, has obtained, that is, come to have a manifest form. Hence they do not resort<sup>364</sup> to Me, nor do they worship Me by suitable rites

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) states why He is not made known thus.

नाहं प्रकाशस्त्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।

मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥ २५ ॥

25 Hidden by the *prakṛti* (*māyā*) characterised by association (with various configurations), I am not clearly evident to all This foolish world does not know Me, who am unborn and the imperishable (in the human form)

Hidden by the *prakṛti* called *yoga* ('association'), being in the form of human and such other configurations which are all peculiar to individual selves, I am not clearly evident to all This foolish world, by seeing in Me merely the human or other configuration (without seeing My transcendence), does not understand that I whose deeds excel those of Vāyu and (even) Indra, whose radiant splendour is greater than that of the sun and fire, who though being observed am yet unborn and imperishable, who am the only cause of the entire universe, and who am the Lord of all—that I have assumed (a form similar to) the human form so that I may become the refuge of all<sup>365</sup>

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।

भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ २६ ॥

364. Resorting to the Lord here means worshipping Him after taking refuge in Him as described earlier (T. C.).

365. 'Yoga-māyā' is taken to be descriptive of the *prakṛti*. It is pointed out by T. C. that the word, 'yoga', being generally used in the sense of relation or association, here stands for that which is associated (in various configurations with the selves). 'Māyā' means that which is capable of bringing about wonderful effects, namely, the *prakṛti*. Thus, we get the sense of the *prakṛti* as associated with the selves in various configurations. This association with the *prakṛti* hides the Lord from the selves. In consequence of this, when the Lord incarnates to provide an opportunity for all to resort to Him, most people mistake Him to be a mere human being and no more.

26. *I know those beings that have passed away, (those) that are in existence now, and also (those) that will come into existence in future: but Me, no one knows.*

I know, that is, I understand all beings—those that have passed away, those that are in existence at present and those that will come into existence in future. But Me, no one knows. The meaning is that among the beings living in the threefold divisions of time (i.e., the past, the present and the future) that are thought over by Me,—(among these) no one is known who understands Me to be of this kind and to be Vāsudeva incarnating in order to be an object of refuge to all, and thereafter resorts to Me only. Therefore, the man of wisdom is indeed extremely difficult to find.

So also (it is said)

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।

सर्वभूतानि समोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप ॥ २७ ॥

27 *O foe-fatiguing Arjuna (Parantapa Bhārata), through the delusion of the pairs (of opposites) arising from desire and aversion, all beings get into delusion (even) at birth*

All beings at birth, even at the very moment they are brought into existence, get into delusion through the delusion (i.e., the agency causing delusion) which is described as heat and cold and other similar pairs of opposites, and which arises from desire and aversion <sup>366</sup>

This is what is said. Among the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, in regard to whatever thing made of the *gunas*, desire and aversion were practised in a series of previous births, that same thing described as the pairs of opposites, on account of its subtle impressions, comes into existence as being the object of desire and aversion, and causes delusion to all beings again at the very moment of their birth. By that delusion, (i.e., delusive force) they get into delusion. They come to be such as have by nature desire and

<sup>366</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara understands the *dvandva* (pair of opposites) mentioned in the stanza to be none other than desire and aversion.

aversion in regard to these.<sup>367</sup> Their nature is not such as to feel happiness and misery (respectively) at union with or separation from Me. The man of wisdom, however, is one whose nature is to feel happiness and misery solely on account of union with or separation from Me. No being whatever is (*i e*, few beings are) born with such a nature

येषां त्वन्तगतं पाप जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।

ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मा दृढव्रता ॥ २८ ॥

*28. But the men of good deeds whose sins have come to an end—they, however, freed from the delusion of the pairs (of opposites), worship Me with enduring devotion*

But (there are a few) such men, whose sin—which forms the cause of desire and aversion towards the pairs of opposites made up of the *gunas*, which hinders the disposition directed towards Me and which has continued from beginningless time—has come to an end, that is, has become reduced through the accumulation of superior spiritual merit in a number of births. Taking refuge in Me, and freed from the delusion made up of the *gunas*, they worship Me alone by force of the previously described gradations in good deeds,<sup>368</sup> with enduring devotion, that is, with steady resolution,<sup>369</sup> for the sake of freedom from old age and death (*i e*, the state of *lauvalya*), for supreme enjoyments and for attaining Me.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here mentions what special things ought to be known and what ought to be acquired by those three types of worshippers of the Lord.

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।

ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्म कर्म चाखिलम् ॥ २९ ॥

<sup>367</sup> The delusion is regarding as enjoyable that which is not worthy of enjoyment and as hateful that which does not deserve to be hated (*T C*).

<sup>368</sup> See the commentary on VII 16.

<sup>369</sup> The primary meaning of 'vṛtta' is concerned with the determination of the mind (*T C*).

29. *Those who resort to Me and endeavour for liberation from old age and death (i.e., the state of kavalya)—they know that brahman (or the self), all about what is connected with the self and the whole of karma (or activities leading to rebirth).*

Those who resort to Me and endeavour for (the attainment of) liberation from old age and death, that is, for the vision of the real nature of the self in a state of separation from the *prakṛti*—they know that *brahman* (or the self) They also know all about what dwells with the self They further know the whole of *karma* (of activities leading to rebirth.)<sup>370</sup>

साधिभूताधिदेव मा साधियज्ञ च ये विदुः ।

प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मा ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ ३० ॥

30 *And those (others) who know Me as being associated with the superior material things and as associated with that which is superior to the gods, and (those who know Me) as associated with the essence of the sacrifice, they, too, with their minds engaged in contemplation, know Me even at the time of death*

Here persons whose qualifications are different from those already mentioned are to be understood on account of the mention again of the word, "those" (*ye*) Even though the statement, "those—seekers after wealth—who know Me as being associated with the superior material things and with that which is superior to the gods (i.e., the self in its state of enjoyment of supreme lordship)", resembles a repetitive reference to something mentioned elsewhere, it is really of the nature of a decisive injunction because of its purport not being known otherwise Hence, and similarly the statement about knowing Me as being in association with the essence of the sacrifice is also laid down as an injunction for all the three kind of differently qualified devotees without any distinction, because of the nature of the subject-matter (i.e., the sacrifice) For in the case of all these kinds (of devotees), the performance of the (five) great sacrifices and such other rites in the form of daily and occasional rituals cannot be dispensed with They also know Me even at the time of death in such manner as is in accord with their objectives.

<sup>370</sup> *Tad-brahma, adhyātma* and *karma* are explained in the commentary on VIII. 8

Since there is the word, "too" (*śāś*), in "they too", those who have been mentioned before as endeavouring for liberation from old age and death are also to be understood, along with others (mentioned now) as knowing (Me) at the time of death. By this it may be taken to be stated that even the men of wisdom know Me as being in association with the essence of the sacrifice because of the nature of the subject-matter (i.e., the sacrifice) they (also) know Me even at the time of death in such manner as is in accord with their objective <sup>371</sup>

371. Stanza 30 is taken to refer to others than those mentioned in stanza 29. The seekers after wealth are first mentioned, and then what is required of all the three classes of devotees is laid down. *Adhikāṣṭha* and *adhiyajña* are explained under VIII. 4. Meditation at the time of death is discussed in VIII 5-6 and later passages also.

## CHAPTER VIII

अर्जुन उवाच—

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तम् अधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २ ॥

ARJUNA SAID ·

1 O Kṛṣṇa (Puruṣottama), what is the brahman? What is it that dwells with the self? What is karma? What have been described as the superior material things? Who is said to be superior to the gods?

2 O Kṛṣṇa (Madhusūdana), how and who is the essence of the sacrifice here in this body? And how are You to be known by men of meditating minds at the time of death?

In the seventh chapter, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) taught how that Supreme Brahman who is Vāsudeva, is the object of worship, how He is the ruler and the proprietor of all things, animate and inanimate, how He is the cause (of all things), how He is the support (of all things), how He is denotable by all words on account of His having all things for His body and of His having all things as His modes, how He is the controller of all and how He alone is supreme (over all) by reason of His multitudes of auspicious qualities (He also taught) how He is hidden and obscured by the things constituted of *saṭva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which exist as bodies and senses and as objects of enjoyment and which owe their existence to the stream of sinful actions flowing from time without beginning (He also showed) how this (obscuration) can be removed by taking refuge with the Lord, which is brought about by the results of very pre-eminent good deeds. Then, after teaching the differences among the worshippers due to differences in the results desired by them caused by gradations in their good deeds and having reference to wealth, knowledge of the true nature of the self and the attainment of the Lord (as objectives); the superiority of one who seeks to attain the Lord by reason of his being inexpressibly dear to the Supreme Person

account of his being always attached (to the Lord) and being single-minded in (his) devotion; and the difficulty of finding such a devotee—(after teaching all these), He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) touched upon the differences among the things that ought to be known and the things that ought to be followed by these three classes (of devotees) <sup>372</sup>

Now in the eighth chapter, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes in detail the different things to be known and followed already referred to

How are that *brahman*, that which dwells with the self, and *karma* to be spoken of—(these) which have been mentioned as what ought to be known by those who, taking refuge with the Lord, endeavour for liberation from old age and death? What are the (superior) material objects and the person superior to the gods who should be known by the seekers of *salh*? Who is to be known by all the three classes (of devotees) and denoted by the word '*adhiyajña*' ('that which is connected with the sacrifice')? And how does the state of being *adhiyajña* come to him? At the time of death, how are You to be known by these three classes (of devotees) who are self-controlled?

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अक्षर ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गं कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

THE LORD SAID .

3 The *brahman* is the supreme, indestructible (self) One's own (material) nature is spoken of as that which dwells with the self The outgoing creative force which causes the rise of material entities is known as *karma*.<sup>373</sup>

372. Vide *G S* (12).

373. This and the next stanza are interpreted in fundamentally different ways by Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva The former takes the *Brahman* to be the Supreme Self, the *adhiātma* to be the empirical individual self *karma* as the sacrificial act, the *adhibhūta* as all perishable things, the *adhidāvat* as *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the Universal Spirit and the *adhiyajña* as the Lord Śrī Madhva takes them in order to be the Lord's all-pervading form, the body, etc., given to the self, the grand work of creation, the decaying things like the body, etc., *Brahmā* the creator who is the foremost among the selves and the Lord Himself.



That which is supreme and indestructible has been designated as "that *brahman*." The *akṣara* is that which does not get destroyed and is of the form of the aggregate of all the individual souls. To this effect are the following and similar *śruti* texts, "The *avyakta* is absorbed (back) into the *akṣara*, the *akṣara* is absorbed (back) into the *tamas*" (*Sub Up* II),<sup>374</sup> The supreme *akṣara* is the essential nature of the self, free from association with the *prakṛti*.

One's own (material) nature is that which is spoken of as (*adhyātma*) dwelling with the self. One's own (material) nature is the *prakṛti*. It is that which does not constitute the self, but which is attached to the self, and which consists of the subtle elements, the subtle impressions etc. It has been taught as essential to be known in the *vidyā* of the five fires.<sup>375</sup> Both these (the *akṣara* and the *adhyātma*) are to be known by the aspirants after *mokṣa*<sup>376</sup>—(the one) as what ought to be attained and (the other) as what ought to be given up.

The outgoing creative force which causes the rise of material entities is known as *karma*. By material entity is meant the human or any similar entity. That outgoing creative force which causes their rise and which has been described in the scriptural text, "The waters

374 *T C* explains in two ways how the *Subāla* text quoted is an authority for describing the individual self as the *akṣara*. The *avyakta* may be regarded as getting into contact with the aggregate of individual selves. This is the figurative *laya* of the *avyakta* into the *akṣara*. Alternatively, the *akṣara* may be regarded as a state—as explained in Note 337 under VII. 6—where primordial matter is mixed up promiscuously with the selves. In either case, this state gets its name, '*akṣara*', by reason of the association with the individual selves.

375 The science of the five mystic fires, taught in *Chānd Up* \, explains 'how the self acquires a new body'. 'Pravāhana traces the course of the soul from the time it ascends to the heavenly world after death in a mortal body. It takes with it the sense organs and the material elements in a subtle state. In the heavenly world, it gets from them a suitable body to enjoy the experiences there. On its good *karma* getting exhausted, the heavenly body dissolves. The soul then enters a raincloud, comes down to the earth during rains, gets united with foodplants, enters a man's body through food, gets united with his semen, enters a woman's womb and there gets another human body. The cycle may then repeat itself. At every stage, the subtle elements, here called 'the waters', undergo accordant transformations" (*S B* III, Note 1050, p. 192.) These stages in the progress of the soul are metaphorically described as oblations in the five fires of the heavenly world, raincloud, earth, man and woman. The practice of this *vidyā* is held to lead to *kaivalya*.

376 The seekers of *kaivalya* are here referred to as aspirants after *mokṣa*.

sacrificed in the fifth oblation become those who are called *puruṣas*” (*Chând. Up. V. 9.1*),<sup>377</sup> as acting through contact with women—that (creative force) is here called *karma*.<sup>378</sup> And all this (*karma*) with things connected therewith (as causes and effects) should be regarded by the aspirants after *mokṣa* as terrifying and deserving to be avoided. The necessity for avoiding (it) will also be taught immediately hereafter in the statement, “Those who wish for it lead a celibate life” (VIII. 11)

अधिभूत क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदेवतम् ।

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवान्न देहे देहभृता वर ॥ ४ ॥

4 The superior material entities (*adhibhūta*) are perishable things And what is superior to the gods (*adhidaivatam*) is the *puruṣa* (the individual soul) O best of embodied beings, I am Myself here in this body the essence of the sacrifice (*adhyañña*)

The superior material entities which have been enjoined as necessary to be known by the seekers after power and prosperity are perishable things. They remain in the ether (of space) and other elements as their particular evolutes and have perishability for their nature. They consist of sound, touch etc., with what supports them (namely, the elements), but are different (from the sound etc. of ordinary experience). Sound, taste, touch, form and smell, which are different (in a superior way), along with what supports them, are to be attained by the seekers after power and prosperity and should be meditated on by them.

The *puruṣa* is the one superior to the gods. The *puruṣa* is indicated by the expression, ‘*adhidaivata*’. The *puruṣa* remains superior to the gods, remains, that is, superior to all the gods like Indra, Prajāpati and others, and is the enjoyer of sound etc., which are different from (and superior to) the multitudes of enjoyments of Indra, Prajāpati and such gods. And that state of being the enjoyer is to be meditated upon by the seekers after prosperity and power as the goal to be reached.

377. The waters in the fifth oblation stand for all the subtle elements which accompany the soul from body. See Note 375.

378. The outgoing creative force called *karma* is here deemed to be the seminal discharge in sexual intercourse.

I am Myself the essence of the sacrifice I alone am indicated by the expression, 'adhīyajña'. 'Adhīyajña' means one who is the object of worship through sacrifices. Here, in Indra and others who constitute My body, I remain as their Self, and I alone am the object of worship through sacrifices<sup>379</sup>. In this way, this (adhīyajña) is to be meditated on by the three classes of qualified aspirants at the time of the performance of the daily and occasional rites like the (five) great sacrifices.

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ५ ॥

5. And he who, at the time of the end (of his life), remembering Me exclusively, gives up the body and departs (from life)—he attains My condition. in respect of this, there is no doubt.

This is also common to all the three (classes of devotees). And he who at the time of the end (of his life), thinking on Me alone, gives up the body and departs from life—he attains to My state. That is, he attains to that which is My state, (My) nature. The meaning is that in whatever manner he meditates on Me, then (at the time of death), he becomes of similar form—in the same way in which Ādi-Bharata<sup>380</sup> and others became of similar form to those of the species of animals remembered (by them) then (at the time of death).

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here clearly points out that it is the nature of one's last thought to bring about the attainment by the meditator of similarity of form with its own subject.

य य वाऽपि स्मरन्मां त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।

त तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावं भावित ॥ ६ ॥

379. Arjuna's question in VIII 2 is "How and who is the essence of the sacrifice here in this body?" T C suggests that 'here' may mean 'in respect of Indra or any such god known from the scriptures'. 'In this' may refer to such a god who is visible to Arjuna. Or 'here' may refer to the sacrifice itself. The 'how' of Arjuna's question is answered by the Lord being the object of worship through sacrifices.

380. The story of this Bharata is told in the purāṇas. See, e.g., Bhāgavata (V. 7-15). It is said that, though a sage, he became attached to a deer to such an extent that he died thinking of the animal. In his next birth, he was born a deer.

6. Remembering whatsoever attributes one gives up the body at the end (of one's life), those very same attributes one attains, O Arjuna (son of Kuntī), he having constantly meditated upon them

At the end, at the time of the end of life, remembering whatsoever attributes one gives up the body, he attains those very same attributes after death.<sup>381</sup> And the last thought arises only in respect of a subject previously meditated upon

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः मामेवैष्यस्यसशयः ॥ ७ ॥

7 Therefore, remember Me continuously at all times and fight (in the war) With (your) attention and intellect dedicated to Me, you will come to (attain) Me surely (There is) no doubt (about this)

Because the last thought arises only about a matter previously experienced, therefore at all times, till your departure (from life), day after day, remember Me continuously And perform war and such other duties which would give rise to (My) remembrance day after day, which are linked with (one's) caste and stage of life, which are enjoined by the *Śrutis* and the *Smṛtis*, and which consist of obligatory and occasional rites Thus, by this means<sup>382</sup>, having dedicated your *manas* and intellect to Me,<sup>383</sup> and remembering Me exclusively at the time of death, you will attain Me, as qualified by the attributes desired by you (There is) no doubt about this<sup>384</sup>

After having taught thus in general terms that the attainment of one's goal is dependent on (one's) last thought, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) begins to teach the different kinds of meditation to be followed by the three classes (of devotees) for the sake of securing it (i.e. the appropriate

381 Śrī Śaṅkara renders "remembering whatsoever god" 'Bhāva' is taken by 'C' to be 'arabhāva', which is here translated as 'attributes' 'Attributes' imply the substratum thereof

382 The means may be *anussmaraṇa* and the fruits thereof the dedication of the *manas* and intellect to the Lord ('C')

383 Dedication of the *manas* is continuous remembering, that of the intellect firm faith that the Lord will give the desired fruits ('C')

384. 'Aśaṅkaya', in the verse may be an attribute of Arjuna, he being described as free of doubts Alternatively it may mean ' (There is) no doubt '.

last thought). Among these, He (first) speaks about the manner of meditation of the seekers after enjoyment and power and the nature of their last thought in accordance with their meditation

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परम पुरुष दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ८ ॥

8 With a mind which is characterised by repeated practice and yogic meditation and which does not move towards any other thing, thinking afterwards (at the time of death) of the Supreme Divine Person, one attains (Me)

Thinking of Me, the Supreme Divine Person, in the manner to be described hereafter,<sup>385</sup> at the time of death, with a mind which is characterised by repeated practice and yogic meditation, and which does not move towards anything else, one reaches Me alone that is, becomes similar in form to Me by virtue of the attribute of enjoyment and power, lik. Ādi-Bharata who attained the state of a deer (after thinking about it at the time of death)

*Abhyāsa* (repeated practice of concentration) means being often and often in touch mentally with the object of worship at all times which do not hinder obligatory and occasional rites. But *yoga* is the meditation in the manner described, practised daily at the time of *yoga*

कवि पुराणमनुशासितारम् अणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपम् आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ९ ॥

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स त पर पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ १० ॥

9—10 He who meditates on the Great Seer, the Ancient, the Ruler, the Creator of all, who is smaller than an atom, whose nature is inconceivable, who has the lustre of the sun and who is beyond the *tamas*—(he who meditates) at the time of death being possessed of devotion (to God) and

<sup>385</sup> In verses 9 and 10 T C points out that Śrī Rāmānjan, for this reason differs from Śrī Śaṅkara's interpretation of '*divyam*' as 'existent in the orb of the sun'

*by virtue of the strength derived from yoga, with an unshaking mind, having well fixed the vital principle of life between the eyebrows, attains that same Divine Supreme Person.*<sup>386</sup>

He who fixes his vital principle of life (in the space) between the eyebrows at the time of death with a mind unshaking on account of its having ascended to fulness of development through the force of *yoga* which is associated with devotion practised day by day—(and who meditates) on the Great Sage, that is, the omniscient the Ancient, who exists from the distant past the Ruler, who controls and governs the universe who is smaller than the atom, that is, subtler than the individual soul who is the *dhātū*<sup>387</sup> of all, that is, who is the Creator of all: whose nature is inconceivable, that is, whose nature is radically different from that of all others: who has the lustre of the sun and who is beyond the *tamas* (or matter in its subtlest state),<sup>388</sup> that is, whose form is supernatural, peculiar to Himself and divine—he who meditates on Him, the Divine Person conceived in this manner, there between the eyebrows,<sup>389</sup> he reaches Him alone. The meaning is that he reaches His condition, becomes equal to Him in power and enjoyment<sup>390</sup>

Then He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the manner of meditation of the seekers after *kauvalya* (the final state of self-sufficient self-realisation without God-realisation)

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विदन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पद संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ ११ ॥

386 This form is based on many *Śruti* texts.

387 The distributor of *karma-phala*, according to Śrī Saṅkara the sustainer and the nourisher, according to Śrī Madhva.

388. *Tamas* is here taken to mean the primordial state of undifferentiated matter from which the evolution, of the universe starts. Hence to be beyond *tamas* is to be transcendent. Śrī Madhva, who glosses *tamas* as *avyakta*, interprets similarly. But Śrī Saṅkara renders *tamas* as the darkness of delusion characterised by nescience and *āditya-varna* as shining like the sun with the light of eternal intelligence.

389. This has to be compared with the *nāsikāgrā* mentioned in VI. 13.

390. The omniscience and other qualities of the Lord here are to be meditated upon as helpful in securing for the meditator power and enjoyment, and not as characterising the Lord as the goal to be attained. Moreover, this form described for meditation during the last minutes is also the form to be meditated on earlier (T. C.).

11. *I shall briefly declare to you that goal (of thought), which the knowers of the Vedas speak of as Indestructible, which self-controlled sages devoid of passion enter and wishing to know which they lead the life of celibacy.*<sup>391</sup>

I shall briefly declare to you that goal (of thought) which the knowers of the *Vedas* describe as indestructible, that is, possessed of qualities like not being gross that indestructible (goal of thought) which the self-controlled sages devoid of passion enter that indestructible (goal of thought) wishing to attain which men live the life of celibacy.<sup>392</sup>

'*Pada*' (here) means that which is attained by the mind (or the goal of thought) The meaning is I shall briefly speak of the way in which that nature of Mine which is indestructible and which is to be known in the whole of the *Vedānta* is to be meditated on.<sup>393</sup>

सर्वद्वाराणि सयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

मूढन्याषायात्मनः प्राणम् आस्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२ ॥

ओमित्येकाक्षर ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।

यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देह स याति परमा गतिम् ॥ १३ ॥

12. *Whoever, controlling all (his) doorways (of knowledge), confining the mind in the heart, fixing his vital principle of life in the head, engages himself in yogic concentration*

13. (And) uttering (to himself) the monosyllable 'Om', which is (denotative of) the Brahman, and (thus), remembering Me continuously—whoever gives up the body and departs (from life) in this manner, he reaches the supreme goal

Restraining all the senses like the ear etc. which form the doorways of knowledge, that is, turning them away from their activities confining the mind in Me who am indestructible and seated in the lotus of the

391 This verse resembles *Kath Up* II, 14 about the *pranava*

392. *T. C* explains *brahmacarya* as continence, while Śrī Śaṅkara renders it as studying under a guru. For the qualities of not being gross, etc., see *Bṛh. Up* (III. 8. 8).

393 The Lord as *akṣara* is worshipped in order that the self as *akṣara* may be attained (*T. C.*)

heart : engaging in the concentration of the mind (*dhāraṇā*)<sup>394</sup> which is known as *yoga*, that is, remaining fixed (in *yogic* concentration) Me alone.

Uttering the monosyllable, 'Om,' which is the *Brahman*, which is denotative of Me: <sup>395</sup> remembering Me continuously who am (thus) denoted (by 'Om') and fixing his vital principle of life in the head— whoever gives up the body and departs (from life), he reaches the supreme goal. The meaning is that he attains the self which is separated from the *prakṛti*, which is of similar form to Myself, and from which there is no return. Later on, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will teach "They call that the supreme goal, which is not destroyed when all material things perish, which is unmanifest and indestructible" (VIII 23-21)

Thus the method of meditation on the Lord by the aspirant after prosperity and power and by the aspirant after *kaivalya* has been taught to be in accordance with their several goals. Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the method of the meditation of the Lord by the man of wisdom<sup>396</sup> and the manner of attainment

394 Here *dhāraṇa* means *yoga* and not the particular stage of meditation described in Patañjali's *Yoga sūtras*

395 The mystic significance of the sacred syllable, 'OM', is explained in several *Upanishads*, particularly *Taittiriyaopaniṣad* (1. 8) and *Māndūkyaopaniṣad*, (IV. 23-29). Prof M Rangacharya observes "From *Upanishadic* sources it is possible to gather that the syllable, OM, originally conveyed in all probability the same meaning as the English word 'yes', that it was used later on as a solemn sacrificial formula importing permission to do the various acts to be done in the sacrifice, and that still later on it was largely utilised as an aid to *yogic* meditation leading to self-realisation and God-realisation. Thus there came into existence a sacred halo of tradition round the *oṃkāra*, and in the literature of the *Vedānta* it is made to signify the highest harmonisation and unity which are predicable about God, and in this way the *praṇava* came to denote God Himself. It is further an interesting feature about the syllable, Om, that, according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, it may be seen to be the result of the fusion of the three primary phonetic elements, a, u and m, and this fact has been taken advantage of to make the *praṇava* symbolic of all varieties of unity in trinity. Moreover, a, u, and m, of which Om is made up, are taken to denote the beginning, middle and end of all speech, as they happen to be the typical vowels that are produced at the beginning, middle and end of the mouth, looked on as the organ which is responsible for the articulation of all sounds. In consequence of this way of looking at the *oṃkāra*, it has come to signify all the *Vedas* and the whole of the revealed scripture of the Hindus." (L. G. II, p 31.)

396 Described in VII 17-18



अनन्यचेतास्ततः यो मा स्मरति नित्यश ।

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिन ॥ १४ ॥

14 I am easy of attainment O Arjuna (Pārtha), to that yogin who is ever united with Me, whose mind is not in anything else and who remembers Me continuously at all times

I am easy to attain by that *yogin* who is ever united with Me, that is, who desires eternal union with Me who remembers Me, having nothing else in mind, continuously, that is, (without interruption) from the time the work (of meditation) was started, and *satatam*, at all times who on account of My being exceedingly dear to him, is unable to obtain support and sustenance for himself without remembering Me, and indulges in memories (of Myself) which are exceedingly dear. I alone am the object of attainment (to such a *yogin*), not a state of Myself like that of sovereign power and enjoyment. And I am very easily attained (by him)

Unable to put up with his separation (from Myself), I Myself want him. The meaning is that I Myself give him that progress in his worship which is required for attaining Me, the destruction of all obstacles thereto and the condition of My being extremely dear to him etc

It is revealed in the *śruti* "He whom this (self) chooses, by him He can be gained" (*Mund. Up.* III 23 & *Kath. Up.* II 22). And He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will also teach "To them who wish to be constantly united (to Me) and who worship Me, I give with love that particular mental condition by which they attain to Me. Out of mercy to those very persons, I who am seated in their mental structure (as the object of thought), destroy the darkness born of ignorance by means of the shining light of knowledge" (X 10-11)

Hereafter, in the remaining portion of (this) chapter, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches that the men of wisdom and the aspirants after *kaivalya* do not return (to re-birth), while the seekers after sovereign power and enjoyment do so return

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५ ॥

*15. Having come to Me, great souls do not obtain (again) the life of rebirth which is unenduring and is the abode of misery They have gained the supreme object of attainment*

Having come to Me, they do not obtain again birth, which is the abode of misery and is unenduring Because, possessing knowledge of My nature as it really is, unable to obtain sustenance and support for themselves without Me on account of My being exceedingly dear to them; having their minds deeply attached to Me, and depending completely on Me, these great souls, that is, men of noble minds, worship Me and attain Me as the highest object of attainment

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) next teaches the cause for the return to birth of those who have attained the objective of sovereign power and enjoyment and of the non-return to birth of those who have attained the Lord.

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोका. पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ १६ ॥

*16. All the worlds, from the world of Brahmā, are such as to give rise to re-birth, O Arjuna But after attaining Me, O Arjuna (Kaunteya), there is no re-birth*

The worlds from the world of Brahmā, which (all) lie within the universe (lit. the mundane egg of Brahmā) and which are the seats of enjoyment and sovereign power, are such as to give rise to rebirth <sup>397</sup> That is, they undergo destruction Hence destruction cannot be avoided by those who have attained the objective of enjoyment and sovereign power on account of the destruction of the places which can be attained by them. There is no rebirth, however, to those who have attained Me, who am omniscient, who will the truth, whose sport is the creation, preservation and destruction of the entire universe, who am compassionate in the highest degree, and who am always of the same form; for there is no possibility of destruction (in their case)

<sup>397.</sup> Śrī Madhva says that there is no return to birth in the worlds beginning from the palace of Brahmā on Mt. Meru. Śrī Rāmānuja here refers to the occasional as well as the universal dissolution In the former case, the world of Brahmā is not affected : in the latter, it also suffers dissolution.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now speaks of the time-scheme determined by the will of the Supreme Person, in regard to the birth and destruction of the worlds up to the world of Brahmā and of those who are within them

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्षद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।

रात्रि युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जना ॥ १७ ॥

अव्यक्ताद्यक्त्यस्सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥

भूतग्रामस्स एवाय भूत्वाभूत्वा प्रलीयते ।

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

17 Those who know (My scheme) about day and night, understand that the day of Brahmā is what ends with (a period of) a thousand yugas, and that (his) night ends with a thousand yugas

18 All the manifested things arise out of the non-manifest at the approach of the day (of Brahmā), and at the approach of (his) night they are absorbed (back) into that same thing which is called the non-manifest

19 This same collection of (produced) beings, having been born again and again, is, at the approach of the night (of Brahmā), O Arjuna (Pārtha), irresistibly absorbed. It (again) rises up at the coming of the day (of Brahmā)

These men who know the scheme of day and night as determined by My will in regard to all beings, starting with man and ending with the fourfaced (Creator)—they know that what constitutes the day of the four-faced (Creator) is a period ending with thousand intervals of four yugas, and that (his) night is also of like form

There (in that scheme), at the time of the approach of the day of Brahmā, the manifested things which are within the universe of the three worlds and consist of bodies, senses, objects of enjoyment and places of enjoyment, rise forth from the non-manifest, which is in the condition of the body of the four-faced (Creator). At the time of the approach of the night (of Brahmā), they are absorbed into that same particular condition of the non-manifest which constitutes the body of the four-faced (Creator)

THIS same collection of (embodied) beings, which is subject to *karma*, is born again and again at the approach of the day and suffers dissolution at the approach of the night. Once again, at the time of the approach of the day, it rises forth. Similarly, at the end of the thousand *yugas* which comes at the conclusion of the hundred years (of Brahmā's life), it is in Me that the worlds up to the world of Brahmā and Brahmā himself are absorbed,<sup>398</sup> according to the order whose beginning is described in the scriptural text, "The earth is absorbed (back) into the waters, the waters are absorbed (back) into light" (*Sub. Up* II), and up to the end (of the series of involutionary states ending with absorptions into) the *avyakta*, the *akṣara* and *tamas*.<sup>399</sup> And because the association with origination and destruction is unavoidable for everything other than Myself, on account of birth from Me and absorption into Me according to a time-scheme, therefore the return to birth cannot be averted in the case of those who have attained the objective of enjoyment and sovereign power. But for those who have attained Me, there is no possibility of return again (to *samsāra*)

398 Immense periods of time known as *yugas* and *kalpas* figure largely in ancient Hindu speculations about the creation and dissolution of the universe. The four *yugas* mentioned in the commentary are known respectively as *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali*, lasting respectively for 1,728,000, 1,296,000, 864,000 and 432,000 years. All the four together aggregate to 4,320,000 years. A thousand such periods constitute a day of Brahmā, and a similar period constitutes his night. At the beginning of a day of Brahmā there is creation, and at the end of such a day, there is a *naimittika pralaya*, an occasional dissolution. It is stated that this dissolution affects only eleven out of the fourteen worlds: all the seven nether worlds, the earth, the *Bhuvāloka*, the *Svarloka* and the *Maharloka*. The worlds named *Jana*, *Tapas* and *Satya*, are unaffected by it. The last named of these is the special world of the four faced Brahmā, the Creator. During the *naimittika pralaya*, the dissolved worlds enter into the body of Brahmā, and they become manifest again in varied individuality at the next dawn of the day of Brahmā. One day and one night of Brahmā constitute his diurnal period. A year of Brahmā contains 360 such periods. And Brahmā has a life of 100 such years. Taking into account the junction periods at the beginning and end of each *yuga*, *manvantara* and *kalpa*, it has been calculated that Brahmā's life extends to 311,040,000,000,000 solar years.

At the end of a Brahmā's life-period, a grand dissolution takes place in the universe, and even the elements are resolved into subtler states. Finally, the whole universe with all its souls is absorbed into the Lord, and remains indistinguishable from Him, till another Brahmā is created.

As creation and dissolution are believed to be without beginning and without end, a series of Brahmās are postulated, one succeeding another.

399 For *avyakta*, *akṣara* and *tamas*, see Note 337 on p. 201.

Then He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches that there is no rebirth even for those who have attained *kaivalya*

परस्तस्मात् भावोऽन्योऽन्यतोऽन्यत्तात्सनात्तन ।

यस्स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ २० ॥

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहु परमा गतिम् ।

य प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ २१ ॥

20 There is, however, another non-manifest entity higher than this non-manifest—(an entity) which is eternal and is not destroyed when all elements are destroyed

21 This has been described as non-manifest and indestructible. This, they say, is the supreme goal This is My supreme dwelling place (which I control from within and) reaching which souls do not return (to birth)

Higher, that is, superior as an object of human pursuit, to this non-manifest entity, which is of the form of the inanimate *prakṛti*, there is another thing, which is of a different kind from this (*prakṛti*) on account of its being solely of the form of knowledge, and which (also) is non-manifest. It is non-manifest, because it cannot be made clear by any means of knowledge. The meaning is that its nature is unique and that it can be known fully only by itself<sup>400</sup>. It is eternal, that is, everlasting, because it is incapable of birth and destruction. In passages like "Those, however, who meditate on the indestructible, the indescribable, the non-manifest (self)" (XII.3) and "That which is like something uniform and homogeneous—(namely, the emancipated self)—is called the indestructible" (XV.16), that (entity) has been described as non-manifest and indestructible, which, when all material entities like the ether and other elements with their causes and their effects, are destroyed, is not destroyed, even though it is found with every one of them.

The knowers of the *Vedas* speak of it as the supreme goal. The meaning is that this is the indestructible thing, which has been indicated by the expression, "supreme goal", in "Whoever gives up the body and departs (from life in this manner), he reaches the supreme goal"

400 The point is that the self can be known only in vague and general terms by the various means of knowledge like inference, revelation, etc. (T. C.).

(VIII. 13), and which is the self existing in its essential state, devoid of contact with the *prakṛti*. This (self) which exists thus in its essential nature and attaining which they do not return—this is My supreme dwelling place, that is, the highest object of My rule <sup>401</sup> The non-intelligent *prakṛti* is one object of (My) rule. The intelligent *prakṛti*, which is mixed up with this (non-intelligent *prakṛti*), is the second object of (My) rule. The essential nature of the emancipated self which exists in its essential nature, devoid of contact with non-intelligent matter, is the highest object of (My) rule. Such is the meaning. This is also characterised by non-return (to birth)

Alternatively, the word, '*dāman*', may express 'light'. And light is here meant to stand for knowledge. The essential nature of the emancipated self, on account of its being of the form of unbounded knowledge, is the supreme light, when compared to the self which is in contact with the *prakṛti* and which is of the form of limited knowledge.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches that the object of attainment for the man of wisdom is, however, quite different from this.

पुरुषस्स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२ ॥

22. But that Supreme Person, O Arjuna (*Pārtha*)<sup>1</sup> in whom exist all beings and by whom the whole of this universe is pervaded, is to be attained by loving devotion exclusively directed (to Him).

That Supreme Person who has been described in such passages as, "(Thus), other than Myself, there is nothing whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (*Dhanarjaya*). The whole of this (universe) is strung on Me like collections of gems on a string" (VII. 7). and "Me as the Unchangeable (Being) who is above them" (VII. 13), in whom exist all beings and by whom the whole of this universe is pervaded, is to be attained by loving devotion exclusively directed (to Him) as stated in "(I am easy of attainment, O *Pārtha*, to that *yogin*) whose mind at all times is not in anything else" (VIII. 14).

401. If '*dāman*' is taken as 'dwelling place', it follows that, according to *Bṛh. Up.* (III. 7), the self and all other things in the universe are places dwelt in as well as ruled by the *Brahman* (T. C.).

Then He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches the path which is described by epithets beginning with light and which is common to the knower of the true nature of the self and to him who is devoted to the Supreme Person. In the scriptures, the path described by epithets beginning with light<sup>402</sup> is mentioned as common to both these. It is characterised by non-return to birth. Accordingly, in regard to one travelling through the path described by the epithets beginning with light, as set out in passages in the science of the five fires like the following "Those who know it (i.e., the essential nature of the individual self) thus (i.e., as set out in the *vidyā* of the five fires) and those who in the forest worship with faith *Tapas* (or the *Brahman*) go to (the deity ruling over) rays of light, and from (the deity ruling over the) rays of light to (the deity of) the day" (*Ch Up V 10 1*)—(in regard to such a self), attainment of the Supreme *Brahman* and non-return (to *samsāra*) are declared in the scripture thus "He (the supernatural person of the lightning) leads them to the *Brahman*. Those who are led by this path do not get into this human whirlpool" (*Ibid IV 15 6*)

"Those who know it thus" is a scriptural text defining the goal this is not indeed with reference to the attainment of the self as part of the science of the *Brahman*, which is taught in the teaching of Prajāpati and other such contexts. For there will then be no significance to the separate text referring to the science of the Supreme *Brahman*, "Those who in the forest worship with faith *Tapas* (or the *Brahman*)" (*Ibid V 10 1*)<sup>403</sup>

And in the science of five fires it is declared "In this manner, indeed, the waters sacrificed in the fifth oblation become those who are called *puruṣas*" (*Ch Up V 9 1*), and "Those with (a balance of) good *karmas* those with (a balance of) bad *karmas*" (*Ibid. V. 10 7*)<sup>404</sup>

402. See note under verse 26. This is a path leading the self to a state of final release.

403. For the teaching of Prajāpati, see the introduction to Chapter III, and Note 96. The point here is, as T. C. puts it, that in *Chānd Up (V 10 1)* and similar texts, meditation on the self and meditation on the *Brahman* are mentioned as separate and equal. If the former were merely an element of the latter, this would be inappropriate. So the meditation on the self mentioned here is different from that taught in Prajāpati's discourse and similar contexts.

404. Only part of the text is quoted. It declares that those returning to the world with a balance of good *karmas* attain births in noble human families, while those who return with a balance of bad *karmas* attain births as degraded beings or as animals.

It is to be understood that it is taught here that the state of existence as men and other beings which has its roots in good and evil deeds refers only to the waters alone which are mixed with other elements<sup>405</sup> and that to the self there is only contact with them. Thus the distinction between the intelligent soul and non-intelligent matter is set out. Then through the statements, "Those who know it thus" (*Ibid.* V 10.1) "They reach the light" (*Ibid.*), and "They do not return again to this human cycle" (*Ibid.* IV 15.6), it is taught that those who know thus about the distinct intelligent and non-intelligent things—the one) as deserving rejection and (the other) as being a goal to be realised—(they) travel along the path described by epithets beginning with light and do not return (to *samsāra*). Because there is the text, "He (the supernatural person of the lightning) leads them to the *Brahman*" (*Ibid.* which declares that the *Brahman* is attained by both the knower of the real nature of the self and the devotees of the Supreme Person, and because of the principle that what is attained (through worship) should be in accordance with the worship<sup>406</sup>—(because of these reasons) the entity, self, in a state of separation from inanimate matter, should be continuously meditated upon as having its sole delight in complete subservience to the *Brahman* through its having the *Brahman* as its self. And the (self's) quality of finding sole delight in complete subservience to the Supreme Being is established from *Śruti* texts like "He who dwelling within the self, whose body is the self" (*Mādh Brh Up* III 7 22)<sup>407</sup>

405 See Notes 375 and 377

406 This is the *fat-kratu nyāya*, which may be roughly rendered as the principle of (results) according to worship. Śrī Rāmanuja explains it thus in *S B* (IV iii 14) "Just as one worships, so will one attain"

407 The seeker of *kāivalya* meditates on his self as having the *Brahman* for its soul, while the man of wisdom, truly devoted to God, meditates on the *Brahman* as having his self for its attribute. Accordingly, in *kāivalya* there is realisation of the self as having the *Brahman* for its soul, while *mokṣa* consists in the realisation of the *Brahman*, characterised by his soul as attribute. In the former case, the *Brahman* as an attribute is of secondary importance, while in the latter case the *Brahman* is primary in the realisation. Opinion is sharply at variance between the two schools into which the followers of Śrī Rāmanuja are divided about *kāivalya*. The 'southern' school, led by Śrī Lokācārya and Śrī Varavara Muni, takes the view that *kāivalya* is everlasting, being a kind of inferior *mokṣa*. The 'northern' school, under the leadership of Śrī Vedānta Deśika, maintains that *kāivalya* is impermanent and leads to *mokṣa* after a time. The *T. C.* has a long, polemical passage upholding this latter view.



यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिन ।

प्रयाता यान्ति त कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहश्शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जना ॥ २४ ॥

23 O Arjuna, I shall declare to you the path (1st time), following which (after departing from this life) the yogins attain the state of not returning and also (the path following which) they attain the state of returning

24 Light in the form of fire, the day, the bright (fortnight preceding the full moon), the six months of the (sun's) northern progress—departing therein (i.e., in the path characterised by them) men who know the Brahman go the Brahman

Here the word, 'time', has the implied meaning of a path, because the path (mentioned here) has numerous deities starting with day and ending with the year, who preside over (particular periods of) time. The meaning is, "I shall tell you the path(s) by departing in which path(s) yogins attain the state of not returning and the doers of good deeds attain the state of returning (to *samsāra*)"<sup>408</sup> By the statement, "Light in the form of fire, the day, the bright fortnight and the six months of the northern progress" (the deity presiding over) the year and others (connected with the path) are also clearly indicated

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्ण षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

तत्र चान्द्रमस ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

25 Smoke, night, similarly the dark (fortnight of the waning moon), and the six months of the (sun's) southern progress—(departing) in (the path characterised by) these, the yogin attains the light of the moon and comes back

408 In the stanza, the term, 'yogins', includes both those who attain final emancipation and those who return to *samsāra*. Hence the doers of good deeds are mentioned in the commentary. As regards the path beginning with light, see Note on stanza 26

This also is indicative of the world of the manes and such other stages in the path described by epithets beginning with smoke. Here the word, 'yogin', relates to one who is connected with good deeds.

शुक्लकुण्डो गती ह्येते जगत्प्रशाशते मते ।

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययाऽऽवर्तते पुनः ॥ २६ ॥

26. Indeed, these two paths, the bright and the dark, for the world (of departing selves), are deemed to be eternal. By the one, one attains the state of not returning by the other, one comes back again

The bright path is that described by epithets beginning with light And the dark path is that described by epithets beginning with smoke By the bright path, one attains the state of not returning But by the dark path, one comes back again <sup>409</sup> In the *Vedas*, these two

409 The *devayāna*, the path of the gods, is described in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* as the path by which departing souls travel to attain the heaven of their salvation The *Chāndogya* text (V 10 1) quoted in the commentary to verse 22 above, describes the path in some detail. Light is first reached on this path by the departing soul The day, the fortnight of the waxing moon, the six months of the northern progress of the sun, the year, the sun, the moon and lightning are further stages in the journey The person of the lightning, who is *supramundane*, then leads the soul to the *Brahman*

The *pitṛ-yāna* or the path of the manes is taken by those souls which are to be reborn They first reach smoke, and thence they pass on to night, the fortnight of the waning moon and the six months of the southern progress of the sun They do not reach the year, or the stages subsequent thereto mentioned in connection with the *deva-yāna* But from the month they proceed to the world of the manes, the skyey expanse and the moon

As verses 24 and 25 are meant to describe the paths by which emancipated and bound souls depart, it is pointed out that 'time' there has the implied meaning of 'path' The several stages in these paths are taken to be presided over by deities connected with particular periods of time See *S B* (IV 3. 1-5)

Originally regarded as the paths by which souls dying at propitious and unpropitious times travelled the *deva-yāna* and *pitṛ-yāna* appear later to have come to stand for two different ideals of ethics, one leading through disinterested deeds to salvation, and the other, through interested good works, to recurring births "It is to be noted," says Prof M Rangacharya, "that we have to recognise here the superposition of a well-known *Vedantic* teaching on the old tradition of the *deva-yāna* and the *pitṛ-yāna*" (*L G* II. p. 165). For an interesting theory about the two paths, see B. G Tilak's *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*.

paths, the bright and the dark, are deemed eternal in relation to the men of wisdom as well as to various kinds of doers of good deeds as may be made out from the texts, "Those who know it (i.e., the individual self) thus and those who worship in the forest *Tapas* (or the *Brahman*) with faith, they go to (the deity ruling over) light" (*Ck. Up* 10.1), and "Then, those who, remaining in the village, perform *Vedic* and secular works of a meritorious nature and the giving of gifts, they go to (the deity presiding over) smoke" (*Ibid.* V 10.3)

नैते सृती पाथं जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७ ॥

27 On knowing these two paths, O Arjuna (*Pārtha*), no yogin becomes deluded by doubt Therefore, O Arjuna, all times, be engaged in (yoga or) meditation (on the path)

On knowing these paths, no yogin (or man of wisdom) whatever becomes deluded by doubt at the time of departure from life But on the other hand, he goes by his own path, the path of the gods Therefore, become engaged every day in the *yoga* called thinking over the path described by epithets beginning with light <sup>410</sup>

Then He (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa*) speaks about the result of knowing the purpose of the *sūtras*, as taught in the two chapters (i.e., this and the preceding chapters)

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपस्सु चैव दाने च यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।

अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥ २८ ॥

28 (That) fruit which is taught (to arise) in relation to meritorious deeds—(such as) the (study of the) *Vedas*, (the performance of) sacrifices and (the practice of) austerities and (the giving of) gifts,—the yogin, on knowing this (teaching), transcends all that And he goes to the supreme, primordial abode

410 The 'therefore' refers back to the knowledge of the paths Hence it is out of place here to enjoin regular *yoga* So 'yoga' here relates only to mere '*dhyāna*' or meditation And that meditation has to be of the form of reflection on the path under reference (*T C*)

Whatever fruit has been indicated in relation to all meritorious deeds like the repeated recitation of the *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva Vedas*, sacrifices, austerities and making of gifts,—one transcends all that by knowing this, that is, the greatness of the Lord as taught in the two chapters (this and the preceding). By the exceeding joy derived from the knowledge of this, he considers all that (fruit)(worthless) as straw. Being a *yogin*, that is, becoming a man of wisdom, he attains the supreme, primordial, that is, unoriginated<sup>411</sup> abode attainable by such a man of wisdom.

411 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara on 'adyam' (or 'primordial') "the *Brahman* which is the cause existing from the beginning."

## CHAPTER IX

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥ १ ॥

### THE LORD SAID

*1 I shall teach you who are without envy this most secret knowledge along with its practical application, on knowing which you will be freed from what is inauspicious*

Particulars connected with the differences among various types of worshippers have been explained. Now the nature of the worship in the form of loving devotion is taught after an examination of the greatness of the Supreme Person who is the object of worship and the high worth of the men of wisdom (who worship Him with loving devotion) <sup>412</sup>

I shall teach you—you who are without envy—this most secret knowledge which is known as worship and which is in the form of loving devotion, together with its practical application, that is, along with knowledge of the particulars connected with worship. The meaning is “To you, who, hearing of the greatness which relates to Me, which is different in kind from all others (i.e., other instances of greatness) and is unlimited in its attributes, will believe that it can be only thus, <sup>413</sup> I shall teach that knowledge, on knowing which, up to its practical application, you will be freed of all that is inauspicious and stands in the way of (your) attaining Me ”

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।

प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

*2 This is a royal science, a royal mystery, the most purifying. Its subject can be directly perceived. It is accordant with dharma, very easy to be worked out in practice and inexhaustible*

<sup>412</sup> Vide G. S. 13

<sup>413</sup> Arjuna is not envious of the Lord's greatness. See T' C' under X 1

(This is) a royal science, the king among sciences: a royal mystery, the king among mysteries. Alternatively, the 'royal science' may stand for 'the science of kings'. And kings indeed are those who have wide-ranging and profound minds. The meaning is that this is the science for those of great minds. And this is indeed their secret, because those of great minds alone are skilled in preserving secrets. It is the most purifying in the sense that it removes all the sins which stand in the way of attaining Me.

Its subject can be directly perceived<sup>414</sup> 'Avagama' is that which is understood, the subject of knowledge. That knowledge whose subject is realisation which has become direct perception—that (knowledge) is such that its subject can be directly perceived. The meaning is, "I, when worshipped by worship in the form of loving devotion, attain even the state of being directly perceived by the worshipper."

Even so, it is accordant with virtue, that is, not separated from virtue. The characteristic of virtue (*dharma*) is that of being the means for final beatitude. The meaning is that though it is of itself of the nature of supreme bliss on account of its being capable of bringing about even then the vision of Myself, yet it is the means for fully and perfectly attaining Me, which attainment is unsurpassed and final beatitude.

Because of this, indeed, it is very easy to do, carried out with great ease, it is to be performed because of its being exceedingly dear. It is inexhaustible, exempt from decay. It does not waste away, even after bringing about the attainment of Myself. The meaning is that with reference to one who carries out this kind of worship, even though the giving away of Myself (to him) is done, it appears to Me that nothing has been done by Me at all to him.

अभ्रह्मणाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप ।

अप्राप्य मा निवर्तन्ते मृत्युससारवर्त्मनि ॥ ३ ॥

414. 'Avagama' being masculine, 'pratyakṣagamam' in neuter can only be a bahuvrīhi compound qualifying 'jñānam'; hence 'avagama' in the compound word cannot mean knowledge, but only its contents (T. C). Śrī Madhva takes the expression to stand for the means of knowing the Lord, who is the Internal Ruler of every sense (or *akṣa*).

3. *Persons who have no faith in this dharma, O Arjuna (Parantapa), persist, without attaining Me, in living on in the mortal path of samsāra*

Persons remaining without faith even after having reached the stage suitable for the practice of this *dharma*, which is called worship, which is of the form of being surpassingly dear on account of its having for its object Myself who am surpassingly dear, which is the means for the attainment of Myself constituting final beauty and which is inexhaustible—they do not have the eagerness resulting from confidence (in the *dharma*). Without attaining Me, they go on living and living in the path of *samsāra* whose nature is death.<sup>415</sup> The meaning is O, what a wonderful thing this is!<sup>416</sup>

Listen then (to a description) about the greatness surpassing all thought of Myself, who am the object of attainment.<sup>417</sup>

मया ततमिद सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।

मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाह तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ ४ ॥

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।

भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ ५ ॥

4 The whole of this universe is pervaded by ~~Me~~ whose nature (lit. form) is not manifest. All beings abide in Me,<sup>415</sup> and I do not remain in them.

5 Again, these do not abide in Me. Look at My divine innate qualities. I am the upholder of all beings and yet I do not abide in the beings. My will keeps beings in existence.

All this universe in its entirety, consisting of animate and inanimate things, is pervaded by Me, the Internal Ruler, whose *mūrti* (lit. form) is not manifest, that is, whose essential nature is not made known. The meaning is that all this is pervaded by Me as the pro-

415. The path of *samsāra* is mortal because it obstructs and harasses the self, or because death is experienced in it (T. C.).

416. The power of evil karma is so wonderfully great (T. C.).

417. So far the greatness of the means of attainment has been taught. Now it is stressed by a description of the greatness of the object of attainment (T. C.).

priest in order to sustain and rule this universe Thus, in the *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* (i.e., *Bṛh. Up.* III. 7), in the texts, "He who remains in the earth . . . .whom the earth does not know" (*Bṛh. Up.* III 7.3.) and "He who remains in the individual self whom the self does not know" (*Mādh. Bṛh. Up.* III 7.22), the pervasion here, there and everywhere by the Internal Ruler, who is not seen by the entire group of animate and inanimate things, is declared Hence all beings abide in Me: that is, all beings are in Me who am the Internal Ruler In the same *Brāhmaṇa*, by the texts, "He whose body is the earth who controls the earth from within" (*Bṛh. Up.* III 7 3) and "He whose body is the self He who controls the self from within" (*Mādh. Bṛh. Up.* III 7.22), it is taught that (in regard to all things) existence and regulation (of their activities) are dependent on Him, as it has been shown that they are subject to His control on account of being His body. so also His proprietorship over all things is taught

But I do not abide in them That is, I am not, however, dependent on them for My existence From them, there is no help for My existence Again, (these) beings do not abide in Me My being their support does not resemble that of pots and similar things in relation to water etc (contained in them) How (are they supported)? By My will. Look at My divine innate qualities <sup>418</sup> That is, see My wonderful divine innate qualities, which are unique to Me and which cannot be found anywhere elsewhere What are these innate qualities (*yoga*)? "I am the upholder of all beings, and I do not abide in the beings. My will keeps beings in existence" That is, I am the supporter of all beings, and yet there is no help to Me whatever from them My will alone keeps all beings in existence It is My will which is mental that is responsible for the existence and is the sustainer and controller of (all) beings <sup>419</sup>

418. 'Yoga' may be interpreted as 'will' on the basis of its meaning as 'thought' or 'meditation', which may be regarded as functioning in the form of will in this context. Alternatively, in the sense of 'that which is associated', it can refer to the innate qualities of the Lord (T C).

419. Cf. Śrī Saṅkara's interpretation that the Lord speaks of 'My ātman' there only in the manner of the world, after differentiating the body and superimposing egoity thereon "Śrīdhara sums up the meaning thus The *jīva* or the embodied Self, bearing the body and maintaining it, remains clinging to *abaddhā* or egotism. I, though maintaining and bearing all beings, do not remain in them, as I am free from *abaddhā*." (Mahadeva Sastri.)



He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) gives an example to illustrate that all these (beings) have their existence and activity dependent on His own will.

यथाऽऽकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुस्सर्वत्रगो महान् ।

तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्यानीत्युपधारय ॥ ६ ॥

6 In the manner in which (under My direction and control) the air, which is of great power, remains always in the ether and moves everywhere, bear in mind that all beings abide in Me in the same manner.

Bear in mind that in the manner in which, in the ether of space, which offers no support, the air which is of great power remains and moves everywhere, and that this air, which is without support, is necessarily to be regarded as being dependant on Me for its existence and comprehended as being supported by Me alone—(bear in mind) that in this very manner all things remain in Me, who am not seen by them, and that they are supported by Me alone.<sup>420</sup>

Accordingly, the knowers of the *Vedas* have said. "The coming forth of clouds, the retreat of the ocean (from the shores), the phases of the moon, the agitated movements of the air, the play of lightning, the movement of the sun, (all these) varied and wonderful manifestations of power sprung from Viṣṇu" (?) The meaning is that they are the great miracles which are peculiar only to Viṣṇu. The *Śrūti*s also teach to the same effect as in the following and other texts "Indeed, under the supreme command of this Indestructible One, O Gārgi, the sun and the moon stand well supported" (*Bṛh Up* III.8.9); and "Through fear of Him, the wind blows; from (that) fear the sun rises through fear of Him Agni and Indra (perform their respective duties)" (*Taitt Up* II 8.1)

It has been stated that the existence and activity of all beings arise from the will of the Lord who is independent of all others. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) teaches that the production and destruction of all beings also arise from His will only.

420 Śrī Śaṅkara interprets that all beings rest in the *Brahman* without contact, even as the air rests in the ether of space. The point, in Śrī Madhva's view, is that there is no transference of properties between the ether and the air or between the Lord and the things abiding in Him. *T. C.* points out that Śrī Rāmāṇa's commentary takes into account the context which has reference to the Lord's control and supervision over all things.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यांति मामिदम् ।

कल्पस्रये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. At the conclusion of the kalpa, O Arjuna (Kaunteya), all beings (are caused to) get into My Prakṛti. I again create them at the commencement of the kalpa.

All things, consisting of the animate as well as the inanimate, at the end of the period of a four-faced (Brahmā), according to My will, get into the prakṛti, which is Mine that is, which forms My body, which is described by the word, 'tamas', and which is incapable of division into name and form. I again create the very same (i.e., similar) beings at the beginning of the (next) kalpa.

Accordingly, Manu says "This (universe) was in the condition of *tamas*. After thinking and willing (that He would become manifest), He (with the desire of creating various kinds of creatures) out of His body" (Manu, I. 5.8) <sup>621</sup> The Śruti also teach the same in texts like "He whose body is the *avyakta*" (Sūp. Up. VII), and "The *avyakta* is absorbed back into the *aktara*, the *aktara* is absorbed back into the *tamas*" (Ibid. II), and in "There was *tamas*, intelligence was in the beginning concealed by *tamas*" (Taitt. Br. II. 8.9).

प्रकृतिं विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

भूतधाममिमं ह्यस्मिन्मवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ ८ ॥

<sup>621</sup> Manu, Sūp. Up. and Taitt. Br. are quoted to show that at the time of the great dissolution matter in its subtlest state and the individual selves are mixed up in the *avyaktatamas* which forms the body of the Lord. Manu and Gītā may be regarded as elaborations of the teaching of the Śruti texts quoted. The passage from Manu is here given in full so that the purport can be clearly understood. "This (universe) was in the condition *tamas*, incapable of direct perception, devoid of characteristics, uninferable and altogether incapable of differentiated knowledge, as if it were in a condition of dreamless sleep. Then the Self-existent Divine Lord, being possessed of that splendour which consists of the knowledge of His will operating on the great external elements, being unmanifest, became manifest as the dispeller of darkness. After thinking and willing (to the effect that He would become manifest). He, with the desire of creating various kinds of creatures from His body, created the waters alone at first and therein put His seed. That (seed) became a golden egg, in brilliancy equal to the sun; in that (egg). He Himself was born as Brahma the progenitor of the whole world." (Manu, I. 5-9.)

8. *Utilising the prakṛti which is My own, I again and again create this entire body of beings which is helpless on account of subjection to the prakṛti.*

Utilising, that is, causing an eightfold evolution of My prakṛti, which is capable of varied evolution, again and again, at appropriate times, I create this entire body of beings, which consists of gods, animals, men and inanimate beings and is thus of four kinds, and which is helpless on account of subjection to the prakṛti that is made of the guṇas, that belongs to Me and that is deluding.<sup>422</sup>

If it be so, it may be said that such things as inequalities in creation (in preservation, in destruction and in showing favour and disfavour) affect the Lord by causing the attribution to Him of pitilessness and similar qualities, this is here answered

न च मा तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ।

उदासीनबदासीनमसक्त तेषु कर्मसु ॥ ९ ॥

9 *But these actions (of Mine), O Arjuna (Dhananjaya), do not bind Me, who am unattached to those actions, being seated still like one who is indifferent*

But actions like that of unequal creation do not bind Me. In Me they do not lead to pitilessness and similar qualities,<sup>423</sup> because the impress of the previous acts of the knowers of the bodies (i.e., the souls) are the exclusive causes for their existence in unequal states like those of gods and other beings. I am, however, unattached to the inequality therein. I am seated still, like one indifferent thereto.

Accordingly, the author of the (*Vedānta*-) *Sūtras* says "There is no partiality or mercilessness (in Him), because it (i.e., creation) is dependent (on *karma*) The scripture says accordingly" (*V S II 1.34*), and "If it be said that there is no *karma* (or results of works before

422 Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that this verse answers the possible objection that the Lord may be associated with the *dharma* and the *adharma* which cause unequal creation.

423. The operations over the prakṛti constitute *samapā-ṛpṇā*, the creation of the totality of the material things in the universe. The *śūlakṛts*, which is helpless, can only be the aggregate of the selves. Making them embodied is *vyapā-ṛpṇā*.

creation), because (of the declaration in the scriptures) of the non-distinction (between the individual selves and the *Brahman* prior to creation), it is replied that it is not right to say so, because they (i.e. both the selves and *karma*) are beginningless ' (*Ibid* II 1 35) <sup>424</sup>

मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृति सूयते सचराचरम् ।

हेतुनाज्जेन कौन्तेय जगद्धि परिवर्तते ॥ १० ॥

10 With Me as the witnessing overlord, the *prakṛti* gives birth to the world with (all its) movable and immovable beings. Indeed, for this reason it is, O Arjuna (Kaunteya), that the world goes on undergoing its transformations

Therefore (i.e., because creation and dissolution proceed according to My will), My *prakṛti*, when looked at (i.e., when made the subject of a resolve)<sup>425</sup> by Me whose will is unfailingly true and who am the witnessing overlord, brings to birth the world with all moving and non-moving beings, in accordance with the *karmas* of individual souls. For this reason, namely, My looking at (or willing in regard to) (the *prakṛti*) in accordance with the *karmas* of individual souls, the world goes on undergoing transformations. Herein see the lordly innate qualities belonging to Me, the son of Vasudeva, such as My sovereignty, willing the truth, and being free from cruelty and similar defects. Accordingly, the *Śruti* declares "The possessor of *māyā* (i.e., the Lord) creates this universe out of this (i.e., *prakṛti* in its subtle state). In it (i.e., the world) another being (i.e., the individual soul) is bound down by *māyā*. Understand then *māyā* to be the *prakṛti* and the possessor of *māyā* to be the Great Lord" (*Śvet Upan* IV 9-10)

अवजानन्ति मा मूढा मानुषी तनुमाश्रितम् ।

पर भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११ ॥

11 Foolish persons despise Me who have assumed the human embodiment, not knowing My supreme state of existence as the great Lord of all beings

424 The Lord is not the instigator of the actions whose results lead to inequality in creation, nor a beneficiary therefrom. The *karmas* persist even during *pralaya* and lead to the inequalities in the next creation. See also Note 186

425 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara who renders '*adhyakṣeṇa*' as 'by the Immutable Self whose essential nature is mere seeing'

In this manner, those who have become foolish by the evil actions done by them despise Me, who am the great lord of all beings,<sup>426</sup> the knower of all things, who wills the truth, who is the sole cause of the entire universe and who have assumed a body like unto the human,<sup>427</sup> out of exceeding mercy with a view to make it easy for all to resort (to Me). They think of Me as similar to ordinary human beings. The meaning is that they show disrespect towards Me, not knowing the supreme state of existence belonging to Me, on which rest (My) infinite mercy, magnanimity, condescension and motherly solicitude and which is manifested (even) in (My) resorting to the human form, and thinking of Me as being of the same nature as others, on account merely of My having assumed the human form.

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतस ।

राक्षसीमामुरी चैव प्रकृति मोहिनी श्रिता ॥ १२ ॥

12 Those who are dependent on the *prakti* which is deluding and of the nature of *Rākṣasas* and *Asuras* are persons whose hopes are vain, whose actions are vain, whose knowledge is vain and who are ignorant (of truth)

Those who are dependent on the deluding *prakti*, which is of the nature of the *Rākṣasas* and the *Asuras*<sup>428</sup> and which hides the supreme compassion and similar qualities of My supreme state in My human form—they are persons whose hopes are vain, that is, whose hopes are frustrated, who have no fruits for their hopes whose actions are vain, whose endeavours are futile. Their knowledge is vain, their knowledge is barren of result because of their knowledge being

426 'T' 'C' points that the meaning of *Bhūta mahesvara* is brought out by the omniscience and other qualities of the Lord subsequently mentioned. Śrī Madhva explains "Him who is existent, great and sovereign."

427 'T' 'C' likens the difference between the Lord's incarnate form and the human body to that between two pots, one of gold and the other of burnt clay. The Lord assumes the form without giving up His transcendence, of which indeed the incarnation is a feature.

428 'T' 'C' appears to say that the nature of the *Rākṣasas* is characterised by *tamas* and that of the *Asuras* by *rajas*. A contrary view is also known. Śrī Saṅkara observes that those who are of the nature of the *Rākṣasas* and *Asuras* adopt as their rule of conduct the maxims 'Cut, break, drink, eat and rob the properties of others.'

perverse in relation to all things, moving and unmoving, belonging to Me. They are ignorant (lit. mindless), because in this way everywhere they are destitute of knowledge of the truth. The meaning is that whatever they desire to do in respect of Me, looking upon Me who am the Lord of all, as similar to (i.e., of the same nature as) others, and for whatever purposes they make their endeavours, all this becomes futile.

महात्मानस्तु मा पार्थ देवी प्रकृतिमाश्रिता ।

भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

13 But, O Arjuna (Pārtha) those who are associated with the *prakṛti* which is divine, are great-souled they understand Me to be the indestructible source of all beings, and then become so devoted to Me as to have (their) mind bestowed on none else.

Those who by (the effect of) the numerous virtuous actions done by them, have sought refuge in Me, thereby having all the bonds of sin annihilated, and are in association with the *prakṛti* which is divine, are great souls. Understanding Me to be the indestructible source of all beings, that is, as One whose name, work and essential nature are beyond the range of mind and speech and who has incarnated as a man<sup>429</sup> out of supreme compassion with a view to ensure the protection of the good, they become devoted to Me, having their minds bestowed on none else. On account of Myself being exceedingly dear to them, they are unable, without worshipping Me, to find sustenance for the mind, the self and the external organs of sense, and they become devoted to Me having (such) worship of Myself as their sole object.

सतत कीर्तयन्तो मा यतन्तश्च दृढव्रता ।

नमस्यन्तश्च मा भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४ ॥

14 Those (who wish to be) in constant union (with Me), worship Me, out of devotion, always singing My praises, putting forth endeavours (to serve Me) with firm resolution, and bowing to Me in reverence.

429 Both the transcendent greatness and easy accessibility of the Lord are known to these devotees who have no selfish purposes to achieve from their worship (T.C.)

Those in union (with Me), that is, those who desire eternal union (with Me) and who are resolved on service to Me with all their heart and soul, worship Me always. On account of My being exceedingly dear to them they are unable to find sustenance for their souls even for the atomic fraction of a moment without singing My praises, putting forth endeavours (to serve Me) and bowing (to Me) in reverence. Remembering My names which are expressive of particular qualities of Mine, they always utter Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, and Vāsudeva, and such other names, with every part of their bodies thrilled and their voices made low and indistinct with joy. In the very same manner, (i.e., with devotion at all times) they put forth endeavours (to serve Me), in works done for My sake, such as worship, and in other activities helpful to them, such as the making of temples and gardens (attached thereto). The eight organs<sup>430</sup>—the *manas*, the *buddhi*, the *aṅkāra*, the two feet, the two hands and the head—having been made to bow down by the weight of loving devotion, they prostrate themselves on the very earth like a stick (falling down), not caring for dust, wet mud, small stones and similar things therein.

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ते यजन्तो मामुपासते ।

एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

15 And others, offering in addition the sacrifice of knowledge, worship Me as one—(Me) who, marked by diversity in various ways, am multiform.

Other great souls worship Me by means of singing My names and other similar activities already described, and also by offering the sacrifice known by the name of knowledge. How! They worship Me, who by being marked by diversity in various ways, in the form of the world am multiform, that is, having all things as modes.

This is what is said. The Lord Vāsudeva Himself, when (in the state of cosmic dissolution) possessed of the body consisting of intelligent and inanimate things in an extremely subtle state, incapable of differentiation into names and forms, and having a will which is unfailingly true, resolves: “May I become one having a body of

<sup>430</sup> Vide *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* (VI 187) for a description of this kind of prostration with eight organs. Note that it is described here as impelled by devotion.

intelligent and inanimate things in a gross state, differentiated variously into names and forms" Only He alone then remains with the variegated world consisting of gods, animals, men and inanimate things. By meditating on Me in this manner, they worship Me <sup>431</sup> Accordingly, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to state "I alone exist, having the universe for My body."

अह ऋतुरह यज्ञ स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम् ।

मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरह हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

16 I am the fire-sacrifice I am the (daily) sacrifice I am the offering to the manes I am the herb (or grains) (offered as oblation) I am the sacred hymn I am Myself the ghee I am the fire and I am (the rite of) the burnt offering <sup>432</sup>

I am the fire-sacrifice that is, I am *Jyotiṣtoma* and similar Vedic sacrifices. I alone am the great sacrifice (which is fivefold and has to be carried out daily). It is I who am the *svadhā* oblation which nourishes the class of the manes. I am the herb, that is, I am the oblation. I alone am the sacred hymn. I alone am the ghee. This is only for the purpose of illustration. The meaning is "And I alone am the oblation consisting of the *soma* creeper and similar things." I am the *āhavanīya* <sup>433</sup> and similar fires. And it is I who am the ritual of offering oblations into the fire.

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामह ।

वेद्य पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७ ॥

431 The point here is that the one Lord has the variegated world as His body. Those who are perfect in their worship—*pūrnopāsakas*—meditate on Him as being thus (T. C.). In Śrī Śaṅkara's view three types of worshippers are here described—those who realise that the Supreme *Brahman* is one only, those who hold that the Lord exists as the sun, the moon, etc., and those who regard Him as multi-form.

432 Śrī Śaṅkara interprets *kratu* as the rite based on the *Śruti*, *yajña* as the rite based on the *Smṛti*, *svadhā* as either the offering to the manes or food in general, and *aupadha* as either food in general or medicine. Śrī Madhva differentiates *yajña*, the sacrifice in general, from *kratu*, a particular sacrifice like *agnistoma*. T. C. refers to another attempt to differentiate these two as relating respectively to physical and mental worship.

433 The *āhavanīya* is the eastern of the three fires at a sacrifice.



17 *I am the father, mother, creator and grandfather of this universe (I am) the purifying object of knowledge, (I am) the syllable, 'Om', and also the R̥gveda, the Sāmaveda and the Yajurveda*

In respect of this universe which consists of movable and immovable things, it is I alone who am everywhere acting as father, mother, creator and grandfather. Here the word, 'dhātṛ' (creator), stands for that particular soul who brings about (and benefits from) the birth (of beings) and is different from the father and the mother.<sup>434</sup> Whatsoever is the object to be known from the *Vedas* and is purifying, I alone am that. It is I who am the *pranava* (the syllable 'Om'), which brings about the knowledge and constitutes the seed of the *Vedas*. Again, it is I alone who am the *Veda*, consisting of the *R̥k*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*.

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुस्साक्षी निवासश्शरणं सुहृत् ।

प्रभवप्रलयस्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८ ॥

18 *(I am) the goal, the supporter, the lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge, (and) the friend, (I am) the seat of origin and dissolution, that which is preserved (during origination and dissolution), and the indestructible seed*

What is attained is the goal.<sup>435</sup> The meaning is that is the place to be reached from here and there. The supporter is one who upholds. The lord is he who rules (the world). The witness is one who sees directly. The abode is a place where one lives, like a house etc.<sup>436</sup> The refuge is the intelligent self who has to be resorted to, on account of his leading (one) to the attainment of what is desired and warding off of what is undesired. I alone am such a being. The friend is he who desires (one's) welfare. The seat of origin and dissolution is that place where there is origin and dissolution of a thing.<sup>437</sup> I alone am that

434 This may refer to such a person as the maternal grandfather who brought his daughter is in a sense responsible for the birth of his grandson.

435 Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'gati' as *karma phala*, the fruits of *karma* while Śrī Madhva interprets it as the goal to be reached by aspirants after salvation. Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation would make it stand for worlds like *Svarga*, the earth, etc., or the objects of enjoyment therein, says T. C.

436 Śrī Śaṅkara renders 'nirasa' as He in whom all creatures live.

437 Śrī Śaṅkara seems to read 'prabhurāṣṭh pralayassthūnam' in the second line of the verse.

That which is preserved is the *nidhāna* <sup>438</sup> The meaning is "What is originated and dissolved is I Myself" The indestructible seed is that cause every where which remains unexhausted I alone am that

तपाम्यहमह वषं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।

अमृत चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १९ ॥

19 I send out heat I withhold and let out rain I alone am that which is opposed to death and (I am) (that which causes) death O Arjuna, (I am) that which exists and also that which does not exist

It is I who, in the forms of fire, the sun, etc. send out heat It is I who withhold rain at the commencement of summer In the same way, it is I who let out rain during the rainy season I alone am that which is opposed to death and am also death I alone am that by which the world lives and that by which it dies <sup>439</sup> Why say more (about this)? It is I who am both that which exists and that which does not exist That which exists is what is in existence at the present time That which does not exist is what has already taken place and what has not yet taken place The meaning is that, on account of (all) intelligent and non-intelligent things existing in all states being My body, I alone am existent, having all things for My mode <sup>440</sup> In this way, they <sup>441</sup> too worship Me, continuously meditating, through the realisation of (My) oneness, that because of the entire universe as differentiated into names and form, marked by diversity in various ways, being My body, I alone exist having them for My mode. <sup>442</sup>

438 T C explains that *nidhāna* is here understood as that which experiences origin and dissolution in the seat of origin and dissolution Śrī Madhva understands by the term He in whom the universe is deposited by *māyā* at the time of dissolution Śrī Sankara takes it to mean a treasure intended for the use of creatures in future

439 Śrī Madhva says that *sat* is *kārya*, effect, and that *asat* is *kāraṇa*, or cause Śrī Sankara explains that *sat* stands for that by relationship with which another thing exists What is contrary thereto is *asat*

440 T C refers to a school of thought which interprets verses 10 to 19 as teaching how the Lord is connected with the sacrifice, the people, the *Vedas*, the self and the gods

441 i.e. those who worship by *jñāna-yajña* as stated in IX 15

442 The oneness here referred to is that of unity qualified by attributes, and not that indicated by the state of dissolution where there is no differentiation by names and forms

Thus, after having expounded the mode of life of the great-minded sages, whose enjoyments consist only of the experience of the Lord, and in order to demonstrate their greatness, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to state the mode of life of the ignorant who seek after objects of desire

त्रैविद्या मा सोमपा पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकमश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥

ते त भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोक विशाल क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।

एव त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागत कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१ ॥

20 Those who follow (merely) the three Vedas, who drink the soma (juice) and who are purified of (their) sins, worship Me by means of sacrifices and pray for being allowed to go to Svarga. After going to the happy world of the chief of the gods, they enjoy in the celestial regions the celestial enjoyments of the gods.

21 After enjoying the extensive world of Svarga, they enter again the world of the mortals, on their merit disappearing through decrease. In this manner the followers of the religious teachings of the three Vedas, who are desirous of attaining objects of desire, gain (only) the going and the coming.

The triple science is made up of three sciences consisting of (the Vedas known as) the *R̥g*, *Yajus* and *Sāman*. Those who follow the triple science are those who are devoted merely to the triple science, but they are not devoted to the *Vedānta* (or *Trayyānta*). The great souls, indeed, who are devoted to the *Vedānta*, know Me in the manner described earlier to be the only object to be known from all the Vedas. Holding Me to be the only object of attainment, they worship Me exclusively through reciting My name and similar actions, induced by exceeding devotion to Me, and also through the sacrifice of knowledge.

But the followers of the triple science drink the soma juice, constituting the consecrated remains of sacrifices in honour merely of Indra and other gods by themselves, as taught in the Vedas. Purified of sins, that is, purified from the sins that stand in the way of the attainment of Svarga, they, by means of sacrifices in which Indra and others by themselves are regarded as the gods (to be propitiated) really worship Me in their forms. But they do not know that I exist

in that way, and they pray for being allowed to go to *Svarga*. After going to the world of the chief of the gods, which is happy<sup>443</sup> that is, not associated with misery, they enjoy everywhere there the celestial enjoyments of the gods. After enjoying that extensive world of *Svarga*, they enter again the world of the mortals, or then merit, which forms the cause of that experience (of *Svarga*), disappearing through decrease. In this way, those who are devoid of the knowledge established in *Vedānta* and are desirous of attaining *Svarga* and similar objects of desire, follow the teaching of three *Vedas* by itself and gain (only) the going and the coming. The meaning is that, after enjoying the trifling and evanescent *Svarga* and such other objects of desire they return again and again (to birth).

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to point out that because the great souls, engaging in meditation on Me than which nothing is, dearer, attain Me whose bliss is boundless and unsurpassed, and do not return, therefore are they distinguished.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मा ये जना पर्युपासते ।

तेषा नित्याभियुक्ताना योगक्षेम वहाम्यहम् ॥ २८ ॥

22 Those people, who, not being (mindful) of anything else, think (of Me) and worship Me well— the prosperity and welfare of those who are (desirous of being) ever united (with Me) I look after and carry on.

Those great-souled men who, not being (mindful) of anything else,<sup>444</sup> that is, having no other objective, have meditation on Me as their sole objective, on account of their inability to sustain themselves without meditation on Me, who go on thinking (only) about Me, and who worship Me well as endowed with all auspicious qualities and associated with all the objects and attributes of sovereignty, that is, worship Me without any deficiency—in respect of those who are ever united with Me, that is, who desire eternal union with Me, I look after

443 Śrī Sāṅkara understands by 'punya' the fruit of virtuous actions (*punya phala*). T C explains the term to indicate freedom from the misery caused by sins and removable by the effect of meritorious actions, or the state of abundant happiness to be gained by such actions.

444 'Ananyāḥ' is taken by Śrī Mādhva to refer to those who think of nothing other than the Lord and by Śrī Sāṅkara to mean those who have realised that they are one with the Lord.

and carry on (their) prosperity in the form of attainment of Myself and welfare<sup>445</sup> in the form of a state from which there is no return (to *samsāra*)

ये त्वन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विता ।

तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ २३ ॥

23 Those, however, who, being devoted to other gods and being (also) possessed of faith, worship them, they, too without following the ordered rule worship Me alone, O Arjuna (*Kaunteya*)

Those, however, who are devoted to Indra and other gods, who follow the mere teachings of the three *Vedas*, who are possessed of faith and who worship Indra and other gods - they, too, worship Me in truth in accordance with the principle enunciated that everything, on account of being My body, has Me for its soul, and because words like Indra etc denote Me. But they worship Me without following the ordered rule<sup>446</sup>. They do not worship in accordance with the relationship of Indra and other gods as objects of worship in rites, as laid down by *Vedāntic* texts like "Wherein (*i.e.* in the Supreme Self) the *catur-hotr* sacrifices attain their fulfilment through the gods" (*Taitt. Ār.* III 11 1). For all the *Vedāntic* texts enjoin only that the Supreme Person is to be really worshipped, when they lay down that Indra and other gods are to be worshipped as constituting the body of the Supreme Person. (In the *Vedāntic* text quoted above) the meaning is that the *catur-hotr* sacrifice - that is, the *agnihotra*, the full moon and the new moon sacrifices and other rituals, therein, in the Supreme Self, while He remains as the Self through Indra and other gods who constitute His body, attain their fulfilment - that is, attain this state of fulfilment, that these rites are the worship of Indra and other gods<sup>447</sup>.

445 Prosperity (*yoga*) is the gain of such good things as have not been acquired previously. 'kṣema' here rendered as 'welfare' is the safeguarding of the good that has been gained.

446 In 'a *vidhi* purvakam', 'a *vidhi*' is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara to mean 'a *jñāna*'. T. C. observes that *vidhi* here relates to the knowledge enjoined that the Lord is the Self of the gods who are worshipped in the sacrifices.

447 For rituals, fulfilment through the gods is to become the means of their worship (T. C.)

Hence the followers of the three *Vedas* do not know that these rites constitute the worship of the Supreme Person and that He alone is to be worshipped. And they become the enjoyers of limited fruits and are liable to slip down. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) declares this

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥ २४ ॥

24 *Indeed, I am the enjoyer and (am) also the lord, in fact, of all sacrifices. But they do not recognise Me, (as I am) in reality, and therefore they slip down.*

“And also the lord in fact.” The meaning is that I alone am the giver of fruits everywhere (in respect of all sacrifices).

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to say: “What a great wonder is this, that, of those engaged in one and the same ritual, by reason merely of difference in intention, some become entitled to very trifling fruits and are liable to slip down, while others become entitled to the fruit in the form of the attainment of the Supreme Person, which is bliss of limitless excellence.”

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रता ।

भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५ ॥

25 *Those making vows in honour of the gods go to the gods. Those making vows in honour of the manes, go to the manes. The worshippers of evil spirits go to the evil spirits. And My worshippers also come to Me.*

The word, ‘*vrata*’, (meaning the taking of vows) signifies will or intention (*sankalpa*). Those making vows in honour of the gods, that is, those who have taken the resolve to worship Indra and other gods to the effect, “Let us worship Indra and other gods through rites like the new moon and full moon sacrifices”—they go to Indra and other gods. Those who have taken the resolve to worship the manes to the effect, “Let us worship the manes by sacrifices in honour of the manes and in other ways”—they go to the manes. Those who have taken the resolve to worship evil spirits<sup>448</sup> to the effect, “Let us worship the

<sup>448</sup> According to Śrī Śaṅkara, *bhūtas* comprise the host of ‘mothers’ associated with Vināyaka, the four ‘sisters’, etc.

Yaksas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas and similar evil spirits"—they go to the evil spirits.

But those who, with these same rituals of worship, worship Me, resolving, "Let us worship the Lord Vāsudeva, who is the Supreme Self and who has for His body the gods, the manes and the evil spirits" — they are My worshippers and they go to Me only <sup>449</sup>

Those who worship the gods and such others, attain the gods and such others, and after experiencing finite enjoyment along with them get destroyed with them at the time of their destruction. But My worshippers attain Me, whom am without beginning and destruction, who am omniscient and whose will is unfailingly true, who am the great ocean of multitudes of innumerable auspicious qualities of unbounded excellence and whose bliss is of unbounded excellence, and (they) do not return (to *samsāra*). Such is the meaning.

He (Sri Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to say, "There is also this distinctive excellence in regard to My worshippers."

पत्र पुष्प फल तोय यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।

तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मन ॥ २६ ॥

26. *Whoever offers to Me with loving devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit (or) water, I enjoy this offering made with devotion by him who is pure-minded.*

Whoever offers to Me with loving devotion a leaf, or a flower, or a fruit or water which can be easily obtained that is, whoever gives Me a leaf or some similar thing, unable, on account of My being exceedingly dear to him, to sustain himself without giving it, and holding such giving to be his sole purpose—that (offering), offered with such a kind of loving devotion, of the pure-minded person,<sup>450</sup> whose mind has attained purity in the form of having such an offering as its sole purpose, I enjoy it as if I was attaining a desired object lying far beyond the range of My hopes—even though I, who am the Lord of

449 'Vrata' or 'resolve' is mentioned in the first line and 'jivā' and 'yajana', both meaning 'worship' in the second. The *bhāṣya* here brings the ideas together throughout the verse.

450 'Prayata', though often meaning 'self-controlled' has also the sense of purity. Here purity signifies single mindedness.

all, whose sport is the maintenance, sustentation and dissolution of the universe, whose desires are all fulfilled, whose will is unfailingly true and who have innumerable multitudes of auspicious qualities of unlimited excellence, (even though I am all this and) remain in My own natural bliss which is of unlimited excellence. Accordingly, it has been declared in (the) *Mokṣa-dharma* (section of the *Mahābhārata*) "Whatever rites are performed by those whose intellects are concentrated in exclusive devotion, all these the Lord Himself receives on His head" (*M B XII 353-64*)<sup>451</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now says: "For whatever reason there is this distinctive excellence, which is beyond the range of speech and mind, for the great-minded man of wisdom, for that same reason do you also become a man of wisdom with your self and all that belongs to it bent by the weight of devotion as described earlier,<sup>452</sup> and always engaged in the uttering of My names, service, worship and prostration (to Me) and similar things, carry out your secular work and religious rites, obligatory and occasional, in this way."

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ २७ ॥

27 *Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever fire-offering you offer, whatever you give (in charity), whatever austere penance you practise make over (all) that O Arjuna (Kaunteya), as an offering to Me*<sup>453</sup>

Whatever secular work promoting the maintenance of the body you do, whatever you eat in order to support the body, whatever religious rites, obligatory and occasional, like fire-offerings, the giving of gifts in charity and austere penances you perform, make over all this as an offering to Me. That which is offered is *arpana*. Do all actions,

451 The previous verse refers to the *havya* and *karya* offered according to rules—that is, the offerings of those who worship with desire for fruits—as remaining at the feet of the Lord. But the offerings of the disinterested devotees are received on His head.

452 See page 257

453 *T C* states that this stanza with the verbs changed from the second to the first person and addressed to the Lord, is used by some devotees. It would run thus

Yat karomi vadaśnāmi yaḥ juhoṃi dadāmi yat

Yat tapasyāmi Bhagavan tat karomi tvad-arpanam



secular as well as religious,<sup>454</sup> in such a way that the roles of being the doer/enjoyer (of fruits) and object of worship (therein) are made over to Me

This is what is said: Gods and similar beings who are known as objects of worship in sacrifices, gifts and similar observances, and you, the performer and enjoyer (of the fruits) of rituals, belong to Me and have (your and their) essential nature, continued existence and activity dependent on Me. Only to Me, therefore who am the supreme owner and the supreme agent,<sup>455</sup> offer everything yourself as the agent, enjoyer (of fruits) and worshipper all the host of the gods who are the objects of worship and the entire set of rites which are worship. Moved by indescribable devotion, meditate on finding your sole delight in subservience to and dependence on Me, on account of your being subject to My control and of the same (subservience and dependence) being implied in the nature of those who are the objects of worship etc.

शुभाशुभफलैरेव मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धने ।

सन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ २८ ॥

28 In this manner, being in possession of a mind which is imbued with the discipline of renunciation, you will become free from the bonds of karma yielding auspicious as well as inauspicious fruits. Liberated (therefrom), you will come to Me.

In this manner, being in possession of a mind which is imbued with the discipline (*yoga*) called 'sannyāsa' (renunciation,<sup>456</sup> that is, holding yourself to be one whose sole delight is in subservience to and dependence on Me and in being subject to My control, and all work to be My worship, and carrying out secular work and religious ritual (with this conviction), you will become free from the countless bonds, which are called old *karmas* which yield auspicious as well as inaus-

454 T' C. says that all actions prompted by whatever cause—human nature, desires or religious commandments—are comprehended here, and illustrations given of actions from such different causes.

455 The Lord is the supreme agent because the power of the individual self to be the agent is derived from Him, and because also no activity of the individual self can proceed without His consent. See S. B. (II. 3. 40-41).

456 'Sannyāsa' here does not mean *jñāna yoga* and 'yoga' does not mean *karma-yoga*.

picious fruits and which hinder (your) attainment of Myself Liberated from them<sup>457</sup> it is to Me only<sup>458</sup> you will come

Hear about this supreme nature of Mine, which transcends the world

समोऽह सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रिय ।

ये भजन्ति तु मा भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥ २९ ॥

29 *I am the same in relation to all beings To Me there is none deserving of hatred and none deserving of love But those that resort to Me with loving devotion—they are in Me and I also am in them*

In relation to all beings who exist as gods, animals, men and immovable things, and who remain differentiated as extremely high or low with reference to genius, essential nature and knowledge I remain the same in respect of being one with whom they may seek protection<sup>459</sup> In regard to seeking protection (with Me), none is to Me deserving of hatred on the ground that he is inferior with reference to birth, form, essential nature, knowledge or any such thing. None is to be rejected as causing dislike. Similarly, there is none to Me deserving of love in regard to seeking protection (with Me) on the ground of his having the qualities of one who may be thus described: 'This person is highly superior with reference to birth, etc., on account of being cherished exceedingly as an object of protection.' That is, no person is accepted (for protection) (on such grounds).

But those who worship Me, having My worship as their sole objective, on account of their inability through My being excessively

457 Śrī Śaṅkara says that the person following the discipline described here is liberated from bonds even while alive and attains the Lord after death.

458 'T' suggests that the emphasis indicated by 'eva' (rendered as 'only' in 'to Me only') means that salvation is attained quickly by one who, along with the practice of *bhakti yoga*, makes over all work to the Lord, as taught in verse 27. Compare Note 177.

459 Śrī Śaṅkara illustrates the impartiality of the Lord by the example of the fire which warms all who approach it. Ānandagiri explains that just as the sun's light, though pervading everywhere, is reflected well only from a clean mirror, the Lord is present particularly only in those from whose minds devotion has removed all dirt.

dear to them, to sustain themselves without My worship whether they are high or low, according to birth, etc.—they remain with Me at ease as if they were of qualities equal to Mine. I also remain with them, as if with My superiors.

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।

साधुरेव स मन्तव्यस्सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि स ॥ ३० ॥

30 *If a man even of exceedingly wicked conduct worships Me, resorting to none else, he must be esteemed (and honoured) as indeed righteous. For he is rightly resolved.*

Even though one violates (the rules regarding) whatever conduct is to be adopted and whatever is to be rejected by those born everywhere in a particular caste, if he worships Me in the manner described above,<sup>460</sup> resorting to none else, that is, having (My) worship as the sole purpose, then he is certainly righteous. He is certainly pre-eminent among the worshippers of Visnu. He must be esteemed, that is, highly honoured. The meaning is that he is equal to those (men of wisdom) mentioned earlier.

How is this? Because he is rightly resolved—that is, because his resolve is exceedingly proper. By him is this resolve made—which is difficult to attain by all (others)—namely, “The Lord who constitutes the only cause of the entire universe, is the Supreme *Brahman*, is Nārāyaṇa, is the lord of (all) movable and immovable things, is our master, is my preceptor, and is my friend (He) is to me the supreme object of enjoyment.”<sup>461</sup> Its effect, namely, constant worship which has no other purpose, is to be found in him. Hence (he is) indeed righteous and is to be highly honoured. When this resolve and the worship which is its effect and which has been described earlier, is carried out, he is not merely to be treated without disrespect on the ground that his transgression from the code of conduct is a slight deficiency, but he is also to be honoured highly. Such is the meaning.

460 The reference evidently is to verses 14 and 15. Note that ‘*cet*’ is tacked on to ‘*bhajate*’ and not to ‘*sudurācāra*’.

461 These qualities of the Lord indicate His transcendent greatness. His intimate relations to the worshipper and His being the way and the goal.

If it be said that violation of the code of conduct will completely prevent the streaming forth of more and more fresh acts of worship, as declared in *Śruti* texts like "One who has not ceased from evil conduct, is not tranquilised, is not undistracted, and also not calmed in mind (through self-restraint), cannot attain Him through knowledge" (*Kaṭh Up II 24*),<sup>462</sup> He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) replies

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।

कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्त प्रणश्यति ॥ ३१ ॥

31 *Soon he becomes one whose mind is devoted to the dharma (of worship) and attains to enduring peace O Arjuna (Kaunteya), give the assurance (on My behalf) that My devotee is never ruined*

He soon becomes one whose mind is devoted to the *dharma* (of worship), the qualities of *rajas* and *tamas* in him being completely pulled up from the roots by his having shaken off all sins through the worship of Myself without any ulterior object, brought about by My being dear to him. That is, soon indeed he becomes one whose mind is exclusively concerned with My worship with all its auxiliaries and with all hindrances removed. For it is worship of this kind which was indicated by the word, '*dharma*', at the beginning (of this chapter) in the statement, "in this *dharma*, O Arjuna (Parantapa)" (IX 3). He attains enduring peace—that is, he attains to permanent abstinence from conduct opposed to the attainment of Myself—(a state of abstinence) from which there will be no backsliding.

O Kaunteya (Arjuna), do you yourself give the assurance in this manner<sup>463</sup>. One who has taken the first steps in devotion to Me, even though he is tangled with conduct which is opposed (thereto) is not ruined. But, on the other hand, in virtue of the greatness of his devotion to Me, he destroys the entire host of hindrances. Attaining a permanent state of freedom from hindrances, very soon he becomes a man whose devotion is full and perfect.

462 The quoted text not merely denies the attainment of the Lord to one of evil conduct, but also the rise of knowledge in him (T C)

463 T C points out that the affirmation gains an added emphasis in that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, instead of making it Himself, asks Arjuna to do so

मा हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्यु पापयोनय ।  
 स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परा गतिम् ॥ ३२ ॥  
 किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणा पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।  
 अनित्यमसुख लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ ३३ ॥

32 *For, finding refuge in Me, O Arjuna, even those who may be of sinful birth, women, Vaiśyas and similarly Śūdras, even they reach the supreme goal*

33 *How much more (easily) then the Brahmins and the royal sages who are of meritorious birth and who are My devotees! Having come into this world, which is transient and unhappy, do you worship Me*

Women, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, even those who are of sinful birth, reach the supreme goal, finding refuge in Me<sup>464</sup> How much more (easily) the Brahmins and the royal sages who are of meritorious birth (i.e. free from obstructing sins) and who practise well devotion to Me! Hence do you, who are a royal sage and who, having come into this world which is transient and unhappy on account of its being smitten by the threefold miseries<sup>465</sup> of life, continue to live (there)—(do you) worship Me

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes the nature of devotion to God (*bhakti*)

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मा नमस्कुरु ।  
 मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायण ॥ ३४ ॥

34 *Be one whose mind is placed on Me Be My devotee Be My worshipper Prostrate before Me Having engaged your mind in this manner and holding Me as the supreme goal, it is to Me only you will come*

Be one whose mind is placed on Me That is, have your mind fixed well on Me without any interruption like a stream of oil—on Me, who am the Ruler of all rulers, the opposite of everything that

464 The *bhakti* taught here is open to all without distinction of caste or sex

465 The three kinds of miseries are *ādhyātmika* (those due to one's self like fever, anger, etc.), *ādhibhāvika* (those which are due to the gods like lightning, etc.) and *ādhibhautika* (those due to elemental spirits)

is evil and the sole seat of auspiciousness, who am omniscient, whose will is unfailingly true, who am the only cause of the entire universe, who am the Supreme *Brahman*, who am the Supreme Person,— (on Me) who have long, shining eyes like a lotus petal, who am like a transparent blue cloud, whose dazzling lustre is like that of a thousand suns risen at the same time, who am the great ocean of the nectar of beauty, who have four noble and strong arms, who am dressed in brilliant yellow (silk), who am adorned with a bright crown, ear-rings designed in the forms of sea-monsters, necklaces, bracelets on the arms and bangles at the wrist, who am the ocean of boundless mercy, affability, beauty, sweetness, majesty, magnanimity and maternal solicitude, who am the refuge of all without exception and without regard to their particular qualities, and who am the master of all

This same (devotion to God), He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) again makes clear (thus) (Be) My devotee. The meaning is, “Be one whose mind is placed on Me by meditating on Me as exceedingly dear.” Again, He makes (this) clear Be My worshipper. That is, become engaged in My worship, which is brought about by your experience of Me which is dear and excellent beyond limits. Worship, indeed, means the course of conduct of one who is completely subservient. Worship is well known to consist of presenting all objects of enjoyment such as those offered in ceremonial acts of homage (*aupacārika*) (like lights and incense), those which come into close contact with the body (*sāmsparśika*) (such as sandal paste and garlands of flowers), and those meant to be eaten (*abhyavahārika*)<sup>466</sup>. What is said amounts to this. Become one whose mind is placed on Me in such a way that you will get engaged in My worship, brought about by love whose excellence is unbounded and which springs from an experience of Myself.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains the same once again. Prostrate before Me. Do not be content merely with all the services of one who is completely subservient (to Me)—services which are indescribably dear and inspired by an experience of Myself which is beloved and of which the excellence is unbounded. Be resolved (further) to bow down in exceeding humility towards Me who am the Internal Self.

<sup>466</sup> The reference here is to rituals described in the *Pāñcarātra* texts (T C)

"Holding Me as the supreme goal", one to whom I alone am the supreme destination holds Me as the supreme goal. The meaning is that he is absolutely dependant on Me, as it is impossible for him to get sustenance for himself without Me <sup>467</sup>. Having trained the mind in this manner and holding Me as the supreme goal, you will thus, through love, of which the excellence is unbounded, attain a mind which is well adapted to experiencing Me, and then come to Me alone. The word, 'ātman', here indeed refers to the mind.

The meaning is that, holding Me as the supreme goal you will come to Me alone, after having, through a mind of this kind (which is filled with unsurpassed love), meditated on Me, experienced Me, worshipped Me, and bowed down to Me in reverence <sup>468</sup>.

Therefore, in this way you will engage yourself, for the sake of pleasing Me, in secular activities like those needed as the means for bodily sustenance, and religious activities like the obligatory and occasional rites, considering them to have been prompted by Me and finding sole delight in complete subservience to and absolute dependence on Me. You will always be lovingly engrossed in uttering My names, making efforts to serve Me, prostrating to Me and similar activities. You will meditate on the whole universe as being under My governance and having subservience to Me as its sole delight. Meditating on the multitudes of My qualities which are exceedingly dear (to you), and offering (Me) every day this worship, as defined, <sup>469</sup> you will attain Me alone.

467 This is the state immediately preceding the salvation of soul emancipation and God attainment (T C)

468 The meditation, worship and prostration mentioned in this verse are carried out with the love and devotion brought out by 'mad bhakta'. T C explains that the experience of God here implies that meditation, etc., are enjoyable because of their being carried out with love.

469 The worship is of the nature of unsurpassed love, leading up to the state where the worshipper is solely dependent on the Lord for sustenance and support, which in turn prompts such activities as prostration as ends in themselves and without any ulterior purpose (T C)

## CHAPTER X

The discipline of devotion with its accessories has been taught. Now, in order to generate devotion and to develop it, the view is explained at length that the multitudes of the auspicious qualities of the Lord, such as unobstructed sovereignty, are infinite, and that the entire universe works under His prompting, on account of its being His body and having Him for its self <sup>470</sup>

श्रीमगवानुवाच—

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परम वच ।

यत्तेज्ज प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ १ ॥

THE LORD SAID

*1 Yet again, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), listen (attentively) to My exceedingly valuable words, which, out of a desire for your welfare, I shall speak to you who love Me*

Listen with an attentive mind to these words which I shall speak (words) which are exceedingly valuable and which are again concerned with an amplified description of My greatness

न मे विदुस्सुरगणा प्रभव न महर्षय ।

अहमादिहि देवाना महर्षीणा च सर्वश ॥ २ ॥

*2 Not the multitudes of the gods, nor the great sages know My lordly power. Indeed, I am in every way the source of the gods and the great sages*

The multitudes of the gods and the great sages, even though they can see things beyond the range of the senses and have greater knowledge (than ordinary men), do not know My special excellence (*prabhava*),<sup>471</sup> that is, My greatness. They do not understand My

470 Vide G S 14

471 Śrī Śaṅkara gives the alternative meaning of 'origin' also. Śrī Madhva gives as an alternative interpretation, "the creation of the world by Me".



name, activity, essential nature, qualities, etc. As I am the source in every way of these gods and great sages, that is, as I am the source of their nature and of their knowledge, power, etc., and as the knowledge given to them by Me, in accordance with the effects of the meritorious deeds that form the cause of their being gods, divine sages, etc., is limited, therefore they are of limited knowledge and do not understand My essential nature and characteristics as they are.

In regard to this, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to enjoin the knowledge about His real nature, surpassing the thought of the gods and others, which is the means for liberation from the sins obstructing the rise of devotion.

यो मामजमनादि च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।

असमूढस्स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापं प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

3 He who among men is not deluded and who knows Me to be birthless, without beginning and the great lord of the world, he is released from all sins.

One who is not born is birthless. By this (word) is indicated the state of being different in kind both from inanimate matter, which is a substance subject to modifications, and the self which is in *samsāra* and associated with it. For to the self in *samsāra*, birth is association with inanimate matter brought about by *karma*. By this expression, "without beginning" (*anādim*),<sup>472</sup> is denoted the state of being different in kind from the emancipated soul, which is without birth and with a beginning. For, in regard to the emancipated soul, the state of being without birth has a beginning. In its case, an association (with matter) which is worthy of being given up, existed previously, therefore it has fitness for this (association).<sup>473</sup> So, by this (description) as 'without beginning', the state of being wholly opposed to it (i.e., such association), on account of (His) unfitness therefore

472 Śrī Sāṅkara explains that, since the Lord is the origin of the gods and the sages, He Himself has no origin. Śrī Madhva takes 'anādi' to mean 'He who prompts all to work and who is the source of all'.

473 Fitness is defined by T. C. as that which brings about an effect in the presence of the complex of causes and which does not bring it about in their absence. Karma and ignorance are the causes making for the association of the soul with matter. In their absence, the soul is free.

is spoken of (here), as well as by *Śruti* texts like "Him who is without taint" (*Śvet Up VI 19*).<sup>474</sup>

He who is undeluded among men knows Me—who, on account of My nature being totally opposed to association with what is worthy of being given up (i.e., matter), am incapable of such association—to be the great lord of the world, that is, the lord even of the lords of the worlds. Delusion is the erroneous knowledge of making Me one (with others) as being of the same kind as others. Being without this (delusion) is to remain undeluded. He (who is free of this) is released from all sins, which obstruct the rise of devotion to Me.

What is said amounts to this. In this world, the king of men is of the same species as other men. He has attained rulership over them on account of some (good) *karma*. Similar is the case with even the lord of the gods. Even so the lord of the egg-shaped universe (i.e., Brahṁā the creator) belongs to the same species as others who are in *samsāra*, because he too is included within the threefold classification (of beings) based on conceptual tendencies,<sup>475</sup> and because of the *Śruti* text, "He who creates Brahṁā" (*Śvet Up VI 18*) (which shows Brahṁā to be a created creature). The same is also the case with some others who have attained such superhuman powers as that of becoming at will small like an atom.<sup>476</sup>

474 As this taintlessness is predicated at all times, it differentiates the Lord from the freed soul (*T C*).

475 In *V P* (VI 7), three kinds of innate conceptual tendencies are mentioned. Everything in the universe is affected by one or more of them, *Karma bhāvanā*, *Brahma bhāvanā* and *Ubhaya bhāvanā* are the three tendencies. Viṣvukṭta takes them to be the practice of *karma-yoga*, meditation on the self and both together. According to Śrīdhara, the conceptions are (i) *karma bhāvanā*, the notion that one does the work, (ii) *Brahma bhāvanā*, the notion that one becomes the *Brahman*, and (iii) *ubhaya-bhāvanā*, the double conception that one does the work and becomes the *Brahman*. The creator, Brahṁā, suffers from *ubhaya bhāvanā*. Śaṇanda and others like him are subject to *Brahma bhāvanā*. All the gods, men, animals, plants, etc., are under the influence of *karma bhāvanā*.

476 This is one among the eight supernatural powers attainable through the practice of *yoga* and other means. Often, they are called the *aśa-siddhis*. They consist of (i) *anīman*, becoming very minute at will, (ii) *mahīman*, becoming very big at will, (iii) *laghīman*, becoming very light at will, (iv) *garīman*, becoming very heavy at will, (v) *prāpti*, obtaining everything or reaching any desired place at will, (vi) *prākāmya*, irresistible force of will, (vii) *īśvara*, exercising supremacy and command, and (viii) *vāsava*, attracting and subduing others.

He, who, devoid of the delusion of considering (Me) as of the same nature as others, knows Me as different in kind from inanimate matter in its states as cause and as effect, from the self whether bound or free, and (in fact) from everything because of its being liable to (My) control, on account of My being opposed to all that is evil and being the sole seat of countless auspicious qualities of limitless excellence, and on account also of My character of being exclusively concerned with controlling (all),<sup>477</sup>—(he who knows Me thus) he is released from all sins (opposed to the rise of devotion)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), after thus expounding the destruction, through meditation on His nature, of all sins opposing the rise of devotion, and the rise of devotion, by implication, from the destruction of the opposing (sins), proceeds to speak about the way in which devotion increases through meditation on His sovereign power and on the elaboration in detail of the multitudes of His auspicious qualities

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसमोह क्षमा सत्य दमश्चम ।

सुख दुःख भवोऽभावो भय चाभयमेव च ॥ ४ ॥

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दान यशोऽयश ।

भवन्ति भावा भूताना मत्त एव पृथग्विधा ॥ ५ ॥

4 Intelligence, discriminatory knowledge, freedom from illusion, forbearance, truthfulness, restraint of the senses, internal self-control, pleasure, misery, exaltation, depression, fear and similarly freedom from fear

5 Refraining from injuring others, the attitude of equality, joyous goodwill, practice of austerities, philanthropy, fame, bad reputation—these various mental states of beings arise from Me alone

Intelligence is the power of the mind to investigate and ascertain. Discriminatory knowledge is the settled conviction about the difference between the (two) substances, inanimate matter and the individual self. Freedom from illusion is refraining from perceiving the mother-of-pearl and such other things, which are different in kind from silver

477 T C points out that the expression, 'lokamaheśvara', is here explained—'loka' by all things, animate and inanimate, 'mahat' by His being opposed to evil and possessing auspicious qualities and īśvara by His control over all

and such other objects previously noticed, to be of the same kind (as the silver, etc., previously perceived)<sup>478</sup> Forbearance is the state of being undisturbed in mind, even when there is cause for disturbance of the mind. Truthfulness is speech which has for its subject things as they are actually seen, and which is meant for the welfare of all beings. Here the functioning of the mind which is in accordance with this, is meant, because the context deals with the functioning of the mind. Restraint of the senses is the withholding of the external organs (of sense) from objects producing evil. Self-control is the check exercised on the organ of internal perception (or mind) in the same manner.<sup>479</sup> Pleasure is the experience of what is favourable and agreeable to one's self. The experience of what is unpleasant and adverse is misery. Exaltation is an exultant state, the exultant state of the mind caused by agreeable experiences. The hopelessness of mind, arising out of disagreeable experiences, is depression.<sup>480</sup> The miserable feeling which arises from perceiving the source of a future misery constitutes fear. Freedom from such a feeling is fearlessness.

Refraining from injuring others is not to become the cause of misery to others. The attitude of equality is being equable in mind in relation to one's self, friends and enemies,<sup>481</sup> and in relation to both what is good and what is disastrous (as affecting them). The natural disposition which feels happy at all the selves when they are seen, is joyous goodwill.<sup>482</sup> The practice of austerities is the disciplining of the body through reducing the enjoyments, as prescribed by the *śāstras*. Philanthropy is the presenting of the objects of one's enjoyment

478 There is illusion when the mother of pearl is mistaken for silver. This illustrates the rise of illusion by the superimposition of the memory of a thing formerly seen on a thing now perceived.

479 Śrī Rāmānuja's explanations of *sama* and *dama* do not differ from those of Śrī Śaṅkara. Śrī Madhva quotes the *Bhagavata* to show that *dama* is restraint of the senses and *sama* contemplation of the Lord.

480 *Bhūta*, according to Śrī Śaṅkara, is birth, and *abhūta* its opposite. *T. C.* refers to a commentator who takes *bhava* to mean *bhavyatā* (excellence) and *bhāva* to mean 'opinion' or 'intention'.

481 As *T. C.* points out, Śrī Rāmānuja here has in mind the description of the *Vaiṣṇava bhakta* (the devotee of the Lord) in *V. P.* (III 7 20) as *sama-matr-ātma-sukh-vipakṣa-pakṣe* (even minded with reference to the sides of one's friends and enemies).

482 Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva interpret *tusti* as contentment.

to another Fame is the reputation arising from the possession of good qualities. Bad reputation is the reputation arising from the lack of good qualities. The peculiar functionings of the mind which are in consonance with fame and bad reputation must be understood here, because it (i.e., the functioning of the mind) is the subject-matter of the context. It is the same in the case of the practice of austerities and philanthropy.

These and such other mental states of all beings— these activities of the mind giving rise to energetic work and renunciation— are from Me alone. That is, they are such as rest on My will.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) states: “Those also who carry out the creation and maintenance of all beings have their activities resting on My will.”

महर्षयस्सप्त पूर्वो चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।

मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमां प्रजा ॥ ६ ॥

6 The seven great ṛṣis of yore and similarly the four Manus, who were all caused to be born from the mind, whose descendants these people in the world are, have their mental states from Me.

The seven great ṛṣis of yore, that is those seven great ṛṣis<sup>483</sup> Bhṛgu and others who were born from the mind of Brahmā in the age of the past Manu, for carrying on perpetual creation— and those four Manus, the Sāvarṇikas,<sup>484</sup> who were established for carrying on

483 Both Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Śaṅkara refer to the great ṛṣis headed by Bhṛgu. The *prajāpatis* entrusted with the work of creation are evidently meant. In *Manu*, I 34, ten such are said to have been created by Svāyambhuva Manu— Marici, Atri, Angirasa, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Vasistha, Bhṛgu and Nārada. The *Viṣṇu purāṇa* (I 7 4) mentions nine in the following order: Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Angirasa, Marici, Dakṣa, Atri and Vasistha. Often the number of the *maharṣis* is limited to seven. Śrī Madhva takes these to be Marici, Atri, Angirasa, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasistha.

484 Śrī Śaṅkara says that the four Manus are the Sāvarṇikas. The Sāvarṇikas or the Sāvarṇas are evidently the four Manus bearing the names of Brahma Sāvarṇa, Rudra-sāvarṇa, Dharma-sāvarṇa and Dakṣa-sāvarṇa. Apparently they are mentioned, as they are the children of Savarnā, a daughter of Dakṣa. Such is the suggestion of T. C. Śrī Madhva takes the view that the reference is to Svāyambhuva, Ruciṣa, Raivata and Uttama.

perpetual maintenance—in the world composed of whose descendants all these people are born, and who become the begetters and protectors<sup>485</sup> of children every moment from the time of *pralaya*—these, Bhṛgu and others and the Manus, have their mental dispositions from Me

They whose mental disposition is indeed My mental disposition—they have their mental dispositions from Me. The meaning is that they are of the same views as Myself, that is, they obey My will

एता विभूति योग च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकम्प्येन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ ७ ॥

7 *Whoever knows truly this sovereign power and association (with auspicious qualities) which characterise Me, he becomes united with the unshakable discipline (of bhakti) (There need be) no doubt about this*

Sovereign power is the state of being the supreme lord. He who knows truly this sovereign power (*viśbhūti*) which is in the form of everything having its origin, maintenance and activity dependent on Me, and also that association (*yoga*) of Mine (with auspicious qualities) which is in the form of auspicious qualities opposed to what is evil—he becomes united with the discipline of *bhakti* which is unshakable,<sup>486</sup> incapable of being shaken in the slightest. (There need be) no doubt about this. The purport is “You (Arjuna) will yourself see that the knowledge relating to My sovereign power and to My auspicious qualities will develop the discipline of devotion.”

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) shows how the growth of devotion is of the form of the matured state of the knowledge of His sovereign power (as seen in wise men of devotion)

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तस्सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।

इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विता ॥ ८ ॥

485 There are alternative readings, ‘*utpādakāḥ*’ and ‘*pālakāḥ*’ for ‘*utpādakāḥ*’ and ‘*pālakāḥ*’. The words are in feminine gender and refer to ‘*prajāḥ*’. These readings, as *T C* points out, will make the creatures the begetters and protectors of progeny, starting with the end of *pralaya*.

486 Śrī Rāmānuja glosses ‘*a-vikampyena*’ as ‘*a prakampyena*’. *T C* explains that this means that the *yoga* is not merely free of trembling by itself, but incapable of being shaken by any external force. Śrī Śaṅkara reads ‘*a-vikampyena*’.

8 *I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me—thinking thus, the men of wisdom worship Me, with the (appropriate) mental state (of devotion)*

I am the source, that is, the cause of the production of everything, that is, of the universe of various kinds of animate and inanimate things. Thinking of this natural unimpeded sovereignty of Mine as arising from the fact that everything proceeds from Me alone and of (My) being endowed with a multitude of auspicious qualities like condescension, beauty, parental affection and the like, the men of wisdom, that is, those who have (right) knowledge, with the (appropriate) mental state (of devotion) worship Me, who am endowed with all auspicious qualities.<sup>487</sup> *Bhāva* is a particular state of mind. The meaning is that they worship Me, becoming full of eager desire for Me.

How?

मन्त्रित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्त परस्परम् ।

कथयन्तश्च मा नित्य तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥ ९ ॥

9 *With their minds concentrated on Me, with their life placed in Me, instructing one another and ever speaking about Me, they feel at all times satisfaction and delight*

With their minds concentrated on Me, that is, with their minds fixed well in Me with their *prāṇas*<sup>488</sup> placed in Me, that is, with their life placed in Me, which means that they are unable to sustain themselves without Me they instruct one another about those qualities of Mine which have been experienced by each one of them and speak about My divine and delightful deeds.<sup>489</sup> They feel satisfaction and delight at all times those who speak are satisfied at their speech which has no ulterior purpose (and is an end in itself), and those who listen, by hearing of it, which is so dear that love for it cannot be surpassed and is boundless, feel delighted.

487. The Lord's auspicious qualities are implied in this verse—those helpful to the creation of the world and those helpful in fostering and rewarding devotion.

488. Śrī Saṅkara suggests an alternative explanation for *prāṇāḥ* as the senses.

489. '*Bodhayantāḥ*' refers to instruction in what is unknown and '*kathayantāḥ*' to describing what has happened (T. C.)

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजता प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ १० ॥

10 To them who are constantly united (with Me) and who worship Me, I give with love that particular mental condition by which they attain to Me

To those who are constantly united (with Me), that is, who desire constant union with Me, and who are worshipping Me, I give with love<sup>490</sup> that same mental condition (of *bhakti*) which has reached a ripened stage of development and by which they attain to Me

Moreover

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानज तमः ।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ ११ ॥

11 Out of mercy to those very persons, I who am seated in their mental structure (as the object of thought) destroy the darkness born of ignorance by means of the shining light of knowledge

In order to show favour to them alone, I, who am seated in their mental structure, that is, established in their mental state as the object of thought, and making manifest the host of My auspicious qualities, by means of the shining light called knowledge relating to Me, destroy the darkness, which is opposed to knowledge, which is born of ignorance in the form of old *karma* and which consists of addiction to objects other than Myself and previously experienced<sup>491</sup>

Having thus heard of the Lord's association with a host of auspicious qualities, and the extensiveness of His sovereign power (an association and an extensiveness) which are different from all

490 '*Prītipūrvakam*' is applied to worship by Śrī Śaṅkara. To those who worship the Lord with love, He gives the *buddhi-yoga*.

491. In this and the preceding verses the following stages in the development of *bhakti* seem to be suggested, knowledge of the Lord's auspicious qualities destroys the sins hindering the rise of *bhakti*, then *bhakti* rises, it leads to knowledge of His sovereign power, this destroys the sins obstructing the development of *bhakti*, then *bhakti* develops. T. C. suggests that the Lord's grace intervenes at this stage and leads to direct vision and attainment. The Southern School would start the entire process with the Lord's grace



others, which are unique to the Lord, and which produce unsurpassed joy in those who hear about them—Arjuna wished to hear the amplified details about them and said

अर्जुन उवाच—

पर ब्रह्म पर धाम पवित्र परम भवान् ।

पुरुष शाश्वत दिव्यमादिदेवमज विभुम् ॥ १२ ॥

आहुस्त्वामृषयस्सर्वे देवर्षिर्नरिदस्तथा ।

असितो देवलो व्यासस्त्वय चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

12-13 You are He who is the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Light, and the Supreme Purifier All the sages speak of You as the eternal, divine Puruṣa, the Primal Creator, the Unborn and the All-pervading So also (declare) the divine sage Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa You Yourself also tell me (so)

You are indeed He whom the *Vedas* proclaim to be the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Light, the Supreme Purifier Thus (the *Śrūti*s declare) “From whom all these beings are born, by whom, when born, they are all preserved and into which they go when they perish—desire to know That well That is the *Brahman*” (*Taitt Up* III 1 1), “He who knows the *Brahman* attains the Highest” (*Ibid* II 1 1), and “He who knows that Supreme *Brahman* becomes indeed (like unto) the *Brahman*” (*Mund Up* III 2 9)

So also (He is) the Supreme Light (as declared in the *Upaniṣads*) The word, ‘*dhāman*’, here denotes ‘light’ He is the Supreme Light, as declared in “Now that Light which shines beyond this Highest Heaven” (*Ch Up*. III 13 7),<sup>492</sup> “Having attained the Supreme Light, he (the released soul) appears in his own form”

492. The sentence, part of which has been quoted above from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, runs thus in full “Now that Light which shines beyond the Supreme Heaven, beyond all things in the universe, beyond the universe, in the highest world transcending which there are no other worlds—it is indeed that same Light which is inside this Person” The meaning of this passage is discussed in *Śrī Bhāṣya*, I. 1 25, where it is established that the Light referred to therein is the Supreme Brahman

(*Ibid* VIII 12. 3), and "The gods (worship) Him (indeed) who is the Light of lights . . (*Bṛh. Up* IV 4 16).<sup>493</sup>

Similarly, He is also the Supreme Purifier, He who is supreme in freeing from sins, One who prevents all sins from taunting the meditator and is also their destroyer (as shown by the following *Śruti* texts) "Just as water does not cling to the lotus leaf, so also, in the case of a person who knows thus, sinful deeds do not cling to him" (*Ch Up* IV 14 3), "Therefore, just as the fibre of the *śikā* reed, when thrown into the fire, is burnt up, so also all his sins are indeed burnt up" (*Ibid* V 24 3),<sup>494</sup> and "Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Brahman, Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Entity, Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Light, Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Self" (*M Nūr* XI 3)

And all the sages who know the truth about what is the higher principle and what is the lower (in the universe), speak of You alone as the eternal divine *Puruṣa*, the Primal Creator,<sup>495</sup> the Unborn and the All-pervading Similarly also the divine sage Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa (declare) "The sages who know the *Vedas* and those men who know about the Self declare the great-minded Kṛṣṇa to be the eternal *dharma*"<sup>496</sup> Of all purifiers, Govinda is indeed said to be the supreme purifier He is the most propitious among the propitious and the most auspicious among the auspicious The lotus-eyed God of gods, the Eternal One remains as the three worlds . . Hari, the Lord whose essential nature is beyond thought, remains thus Madhusudana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) is there (i.e., in *Dwāraka*) alone"

493. The complete sentence, part of which has been quoted here, runs thus 'The gods worship Him, indeed, below whom the year revolves with (its) days, who is the Light of lights, who is Life and who is beyond (temporal) mortality'

494. The reference first is to the sins arising through inadvertence of one who is a student of the science of the Brahman See *Śrībhāṣya* IV 1 13 And by 'pāpam karma' is to be understood all effects of actions, good or bad, which stand in the way of salvation The *sancita-karma*, that is, the accumulated karma of the past which has not yet begun to function as *prārabdha*, is next referred to The performance of *prārabdha*, making sacrificial offerings to the five *prāṇas*, with a full knowledge that the *Vaiśvānara* (the gastric fire) is a manifestation of the Supreme Self is praised in the *Upaniṣad* as leading to this result Vide *Śrībhāṣya*, I. 2 32

495. 'Adideva' is explained by T. C. as 'He who is the cause and to whom the process of the universe is mere play'

496. The context in the epic is where Dhaumya instructs the Pāṇḍava princes in exile about various places of pilgrimage.

(*M B* III. 86 26-28),<sup>497</sup> " This Nārāyaṇa, the lord of Śrī, whose mansion is the milky ocean, has indeed come to the city of Madhurā, leaving His serpent bed<sup>498</sup> Where Madhusūdana is, there is the sacred Dvāravatī He is the Lord Himself, the Primeval One and indeed the eternal *dharma* " (*Ibid* 24-25)

So also (it is said) " O son of Kuntī, where Nārāyaṇa, the Lord, the Supreme Self, the Eternal One, is, there the entire universe is to be found There, too, are the sacred waters and the holy shrines That is sacred, that is the Supreme *Brahman*, that is the place of the sacred waters, that is the penance-grove There dwell the divine sages, the *siddhas* and all those who are rich in austerities where the Primal Creator, the Great *Yogin*, Madhusūdana remains It is the most sacred among the sacred For you, let there be no doubt at all about this " (*M B* III 88 22-28, 30-31)<sup>499</sup>

" Kṛṣṇa is Himself indeed (the cause of) the origin and dissolution of all beings (and worlds) For this universe, containing things animate and inanimate, was brought into existence and exists for the sake of Kṛṣṇa " (*M B* II 41 23)<sup>500</sup>

And You Yourself say (so) (in the course of Your teaching) commencing with, " Earth, water, fire, ether, *manas*, *buddhi* (or *mahat*) and also *aṅkāra* (or the principle of egoity)—this *prakṛti*, thus divided into eight principles, is Mine " (VII 4), and ending with " I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me " (X 8)

सर्वमेतदृत मन्ये यन्मा वदसि केशव ।

न हि ते भगवन् व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवा ॥ १४ ॥

14 I consider all this to be true, O Kṛṣṇa (Keshava), which You tell Me Indeed, neither the gods nor the demons understand, O Lord, (the manner of) Your manifestation

497 ' Eternal *dharma* ' is the means for attaining the eternal and unsurpassed fruit of salvation

498 This verse is attributed by Dhaumya to Nārada (*Ibid* , verse 22).

499 This is how Dhaumya praises the shrine of Badarikāśrama on the Himalayas to Yudhiṣṭhira.

500. See Note 167.

All this I consider, therefore, to be a statement of things as they actually are, and not having for its purpose anything like a panegyric—all this which you tell Me about Your sovereign power and infinity of auspicious qualities, which are unique, of which the excellence is unbounded and which arise from Your essential nature. Hence, O Lord, O treasury of unsurpassed knowledge, power, strength, sovereignty, valour and glory—neither the gods nor the demons, who are (both) possessed (only) of limited knowledge, understand Your manifestation, the manner in which You manifest Yourself.

स्वयमेवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।

भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५ ॥

15 O Supreme Person, O Creator of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the universe! You Yourself know Yourself through Yourself

O Supreme Person, through Yourself (without the help of any one else) You Yourself know Yourself that is, through Your own knowledge O Creator of beings, that is, O Begetter of all beings! O Lord of beings, that is, O Governor of all beings! O God of gods, that is, O Supreme God even of the gods<sup>501</sup> Just as the gods remain surpassing men, animals, birds, reptiles and such other beings in beauty, gracious condescension and other similar multitudes of auspicious qualities, O You who in the same way surpass all these gods in all these qualities! O Ruler of the universe, O Master and Owner of the universe!

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमास्त्व व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

16 'The manifestations of Your will to rule which are indeed divine—be pleased to speak (about these) by which manifestations of the will to rule You stand pervading these worlds

Whatever manifestations of the will to rule are divine, unique to Yourself—about all of them without exception it is right that You Yourself should speak. The meaning is, "Do You Yourself make

501. 'Devadevas' is explained with a phrase from Śvet. Up. (VI. 7)

(them) clearly understood" Associated with these countless *viśhātis*, these instances of manifestation of the will to rule,<sup>502</sup> You stand pervading all these worlds as (their) controller

कथं विद्यामह योगी त्वा सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।

केषुकेषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ १७ ॥

17 Practising (the) yoga (of devotion) and engaged constantly in meditation, how shall I know You? O Lord! in what varied dispositions of the mind are You to be meditated upon by me?

Practising yoga,<sup>503</sup> that is, following the discipline of devotion, and engaged constantly in meditating with devotion on You, that is, having started to meditate (on You)—how shall I know You, the object of meditation, as fully possessed of a multitude of auspicious qualities like sovereign power? And in what varied mental dispositions,<sup>504</sup> which have not yet been mentioned and which are different from intelligence, discriminatory knowledge and other mental dispositions mentioned previously (in X 4-5), are You to be meditated upon by me in (Your) capacity as controller?

विस्तरेणात्मनो योग विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।

भूय कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ १८ ॥

18 Tell me again in detail, O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), about Your association (with auspicious qualities) and sovereign power For there is no satiety for me, listening to this nectar

Tell (me) again in detail about Your association with such auspicious qualities like being the creator, etc., and (Your) *viśhātis*, the will to rule, which have been briefly stated in "I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me" (X 8) For there is no satiety to me, listening to the nectar of Your glory The purport

502. Śrī Śaṅkara renders '*viśhātishah*' as '*māhātmya-vistarah*', 'by means of multitudinous glories' Śrī Madhva understands by *viśhātayaḥ* varied kinds of glory

503. Śrī Śaṅkara reads '*Yoga*' for Śrī Rāmānuja's '*Yog*' The former being in the vocative case will apply to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while the latter in the nominative case is descriptive of Arjuna.

504. '*Bhāveṣu*' is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara to mean 'in things', '*vastuṣu*'

is, " My lack of contentment (i.e., ardour to know more of this delightful teaching) is certainly known to You "

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि विभूतीरात्मनश्शुभाः ।

प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १९ ॥

### THE LORD SAID

19 Right gladly will I tell you, O Arjuna (Kuruśreṣṭha), the auspicious objects of My will to rule, taking into consideration their importance. There is no end to an extensive description of (the objects of) My (will to rule)

O best of Kurus, I will tell you of the auspicious objects of My will to rule, taking into consideration their importance. By the word, 'prādhānya' (importance), eminence is intended to be indicated. For it will be stated, " (Know) Me as the chief among family priests " (X 24). I shall speak of some of the objects of My rule which are eminent in the world. It is not possible to speak of or listen to (them) in detail, because of their being endless. The quality of being a *vibhūti* is the same as being under control<sup>505</sup> because of the expository statement, " Whoever knows truly this sovereign power and association (with auspicious qualities) which characterise Me " (X 7), after stating that various kinds of mental dispositions like intelligence, etc., of all beings arise only from Me.

Accordingly, it has been stated, there<sup>506</sup> that being the creator, etc., is indicated by the word, 'yoga', and that being their impeller is indicated by the word, 'vibhūti'. Again (it has been taught) " I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me—

505. T. C. points out that earlier (in X 16, 18) 'vibhūti' has been understood as 'niyamana', the will to rule. Here it refers to objects over which rule is exercised. The slight difference in the senses in which the word is taken in Arjuna's question and Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answer should not cause any difficulty.

506. In the commentary on X 7, yoga has been defined as the quality " which is in the form of auspicious traits opposed to all that is evil." The commentary on the next verse illustrates this multitude of auspicious qualities as " condescension, beauty, parental affection and the like ". Being the protector, creator and destroyer is included in these auspicious qualities.

thinking thus, the men of wisdom worship Me, with the (appropriate) mental state (of devotion) " (X 8)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) clearly declares in regard to this that the governance of all beings through impelling (their activities) is by remaining their Self and that being the creator, protector and destroyer of everything is indicated by the word, 'yoga'

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

अहमादिश्च मध्य च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥ २० ॥

20 I am the Self, O Arjuna (Guḍākeśa), seated in the hearts of all embodied beings And, I indeed, am the beginning, the middle and the end of embodied beings

I remain as the Self in the *āśaya*, the heart, of all beings who constitute My body The Self, indeed, is in every way the supporter and controller of and the recipient of service from the body To this effect, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will teach "And I am seated in the hearts of all From Me come memory, knowledge, and the faculty of reason" (XV 15) and "The Lord dwells, O Arjuna 'in region of the heart of all beings, causing all beings that are mounted on the machine (of the body) to revolve (i.e., to work) by means of the *prakṛti* (or *māyā*) (which is under His control and in accordance with its *gunas*) (XVIII 61)

The *Vedas* also declare "He who, dwelling in all embodied beings, is within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are, who controls all beings from within, is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Bṛh Up* III 7 21) and "He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self, whom the self does not know whose body the self is, and who controls the self from within, He is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Mādh Bṛh Up* III 7. 22) <sup>507</sup> Thus I remain as the Self of all beings and am their beginning,

507. The sense in which all things animate and inanimate are conceived of as the body of the Lord is defined under *S B.* (II 1. 9) "That substance which, in regard to all things as can be accomplished by it, is completely (and always) capable of being controlled and supported by an intelligent soul and which has its essential nature solely subservient unto the glory of that (individual soul)—that (substance) is the body of that (intelligent soul)" See *S B* II. Note 739 for an explanation of this definition.

middle and end That is, I am the cause of their origin, maintenance and dissolution <sup>508</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) shows that the Lord remaining the Self in all things which form the objects over which His will to rule is exercised is the reason for indicating Him by grammatical equations with the several words about them. Then He points out particular objects subject to His will to rule, on the basis of the grammatical equation <sup>509</sup> For, the Lord being the Self, all words find their final meaning in Him alone. In the same way in which words like 'god', 'man', 'bird', 'tree', etc., referring to bodies, find their final meaning in the respective selves of these, similarly the Lord being the Self of each one of them is itself the basis for grammatical equations with the words about them. At the end of the discussion on the *vibhūti*s, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), by means of a statement about all things being incapable of existing without Him, will teach this "There is nothing whatever, movable or immovable, which can exist without Me" (X 39). That the impossibility of independent existence arise from being subject to control, has been taught in the beginning in "Everything proceeds from Me" (X 8).

आदित्यानामह विष्णुर्ज्योतिषा रविरशुमान् ।

मरीचिर्मस्तामस्मि नक्षत्राणामह शशी ॥ २१ ॥

21 I am Viṣṇu among the Adityas, the radiant sun among shining heavenly bodies. Among the Maruts I am Marīci. In regard to asterisms I am the moon (who is their lord).

508 The first line briefly declares the Lord's *vibhūti*, while the second line refers to His *yoga* (T C).

509 The Sanskrit expression, 'sāmānādhikaranyā', has been rendered as 'grammatical equation'. It is a kind of statement of identity in a sentence between the objects denoted by words in the same grammatical case. Kāyaṭa, in his commentary on Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, under Pāṇini (I 2. 42), defines it thus. When many words having a variety of significations are used so as to import only one thing, there is a grammatical equation. In the verses that follow we have Śrī Kṛṣṇa identifying Himself with a number of persons and things. There is thus a series of grammatical equations. The basis for these equations, it is pointed out here, is that the *Brahman* is the Self of all things. T. C. explains that in verse 20 we have an indication that all grammatical equations between the *Brahman* and anything else, both those already stated and those to be given presently, rest on the nexus of cause and effect or the relationship of soul and body.



Among the Ādityas, who are reckoned as twelve in number, I am the twelfth Āditya, named Viṣṇu, who is the most important <sup>510</sup> Among shining heavenly bodies, that is, among the light-giving objects in the world, I am the sun, that is, the class of Ādityas. I am that Marici who is the most eminent among the Maruts. In regard to asterism<sup>2</sup>, I am the moon. The use of the genitive case here is not to specify (one out of a group), but in the same way as in the statement, "I am consciousness in (all) beings" (X 22). I am that moon who is the lord of the asterisms <sup>511</sup>

वेदाना सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासव ।

इन्द्रियाणा मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ २२ ॥

22 I am the Sāma-Veda among the Vedas. I am Indra (Vāsava) among the gods. Among organs of sense, I am the manas. I am consciousness in (all) beings.

Among the Vedas, that is, among the Rg, Yajur, Sāma and Atharvāna, I am that Sāma-Veda which is pre-eminent. Among the gods I am Indra. Among the eleven organs of the sense, <sup>512</sup> I am the organ of sense known as manas, which is the most important. Among beings, that is, among those possessed of consciousness, I am that consciousness. Here, too, is (i.e., the genitive case) is not being used for specifying (one out of a class).

रुद्राणा शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।

वसूना पावकश्चास्मि मेरुशिखरिणामहम् ॥ २३ ॥

23 Among the Rudras, I am Śankara, and (I am Kubera) the lord of wealth in relation to the Yakṣas and the Rākṣasas. I am the

510. "The twelve Ādityas are called Dhātṛ, Aryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, Vivasvat, Pūṣan, Parjanya, Amśa, Bhaga, Tvāṣṭṛ, and Viṣṇu. The Purāṇas make them the twelve suns shining during the twelve months of the year, one for each month. . . In the Mahābhārata and in a wide range of our sacred literature, Viṣṇu is regarded as the chief among the Ādityas." (L G II., pp 276-7)

511 The genitive can also indicate mere relationship of some kind. The moon, not being included among asterisms, is here regarded as their lord.

512. That is, the five organs of sense, the five organs of action and manas (or the faculty of attention).

*god of fire among the Vasus, and among mountains with (beautiful) peaks, I am Meru*

Among the eleven Rudras, I am Śaṅkara In relation to the Yakṣas and the Rākṣasas, I am (Kubera) the son of Viśravaś.<sup>513</sup> I am the god of fire among the eight Vasus Among those with peaks, that is, among those mountains which shine with (beautiful) peaks, I am Meru

पुरोषसा च मुख्य मा विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।  
सेनानीनामह स्कन्द सरसामस्मि सागर ॥ २४ ॥

24 And know Me, O Arjuna (Pārtha), to be Brhaspati, the chief among family priests Among leaders of armies, I am Skanda I am the sea among reservoirs of water

I am that Brhaspati who is the chief among family priests Among leaders of armies, commander-in-chief, I am Skanda Among reservoirs of water, I am the sea

महर्षीणा भृगुरह गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।  
यज्ञाना जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणा हिमालय ॥ २५ ॥

25 Among the great sages, I am Bhṛgu Among words, I am the single syllable (Om) I am the japa-offering among offerings Among immovable objects, I am the Himālaya (mountain)

I am Bhṛgu among great sages like Marici and others Words are sounds conveying meaning Among such (words), I am the single syllable, *pranava* (or *Om*) I am the offering of muttered prayer (*japa*)<sup>514</sup> which is the highest among offerings I am the Himālaya (mountain) among mere mountains.

513 Both Rākṣasas and Yakṣas are said to be descended from Pulastya or, according to another account, from Kṛśāś Kubera is regarded as the lord of both, though he is a Yakṣa.

514. " Briefly, *japa* is silent meditation we perform a *japa*, when, muttering inaudibly, we go through a formula known as a *mantra*. In this process, the mind is concentrated on the object of meditation . . ." (L. G. II, p. 281).

अश्वत्थस्सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणा च नारदः ।

गन्धर्वाणा चित्ररथस्सिद्धाना कपिलो मुनिः ॥ २६ ॥

26 Among trees of all kinds I am the *śvattha* (tree) I am Nārada among the divine sages Among Gandharvas, I am Chitraratha, and among the Siddhas, I am the sage Kapila

Among trees, I am the *śvattha*, which is worthy of worship  
Among the divine sages,<sup>515</sup> I am Nārada

उच्चैश्श्रवसमश्वाना विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।

ऐरावत गजेन्द्राणा नराणा च नराधिपम् ॥ २७ ॥

आयुधानामह वज्र घेनूनामस्मि कामधुकम् ।

प्रजनञ्चास्मि कन्दर्प सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकि ॥ २८ ॥

अनन्तञ्चास्मि नागाना वरुणो यादसामहम् ।

पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमस्सयमतामहम् ॥ २९ ॥

27 Among horses, know Me to be Uccaiśravas, brought forth through (the churning of the ocean of milk for) nectar Among the great elephants, (know Me to be) Airāvata, and among men (know Me to be) the king

28 Among weapons I am the Vajra (of Indra) Among cows I am Kāmadhuk (the wish-yielding cow) I am Kandarpa, the progenitor, and among snakes I am Vāsuki

29 And among (many-headed) serpents I am Ananta Among aquatic creatures I am Varuna I am Aryamā among the manes and Yama among those who restrain and control

Kāmadhuk is the divine cow (of Indra) I am the god of love who is the cause of birth Sarpas are single-headed (snakes), while nāgas are many-headed (snakes) Creatures living in water are known as 'yādāmas' Among them, I am Varuṇa. I am Yama, the son of the sun-god, among those who punish

515. That is, sages who are also gods and to whom the mantras of the Vedas have been revealed (Śrī Śaṅkara).

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि देत्यानां काल कलयतामहम् ।

मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥ ३० ॥

30 And among the descendants of Diti, I am Prahlāda I am Death (Kāla) among those who count And I am the lion among beasts and (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā among birds

Among those who count with the desire to cause evil, I am Death <sup>516</sup>

पवन पवतामस्मि रामश्शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।

झषाणा मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ ३१ ॥

31 Among moving things, I am the wind I am Rāma among those who bear weapons Among fishes I am (the sea-monster) makara And among flowing streams, I am the Gangā (Jāhnavī)

Among moving things, that is, among things whose nature is moving about, I am the wind I am Rāma among those who bear weapons Here the attribute of bearing weapons is the *vidhūti* (or that which is subject to control), as no other meaning is possible Āditya and others, being individual souls, constitute attributes of the Lord, who stands as their Self on account of their constituting His body ; thus they stand in the position of the attribute of bearing weapons.<sup>517</sup>

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां बाह्यं प्रवदतामहम् ॥ ३२ ॥

516 Yama mentioned in verse 29 is the god of death Apparently, some more in his establishment whose duty it is to calculate the date of death of everyone is meant here.

517. By 'Rāma' is meant the incarnation of the Lord as the son of Daśaratha As He is the Lord Himself, He cannot be the member of a class. Hence the commentary here suggests that 'I am Rāma among those who bear weapons' means nothing more than 'I am Rāma who bears weapons' To show that the principle involved in this statement is not different from that in other statements in this chapter, it is pointed that just as an attribute is mentioned here, even so the individual selves mentioned earlier are attributes.

32. *In relation to creatures I am the beginning and the end, and also the middle, O Arjuna Among sciences, I am the science relating to the soul.*<sup>518</sup> *In relation to those who argue and discuss, I am fair discussion*

Those that are created are creatures. Their beginning is their cause The meaning is that, in relation to all living beings, which are being created at all times, I alone am the creator in the case of everyone of them Similarly, I alone am the end, that is, the destroyer in the case of everyone of those who are being destroyed at all times. Similarly, in the case of the middle, that is, protection The meaning is that I alone am the protector of those who are being protected at all times

Among those who indulge in one-sided arguments (*jalpa*), destructive criticism (*vitandā*) and other modes of discussion, I am fair discussion which endeavours to determine the truth

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वस्तामसिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षय काल धाताऽह विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३ ॥

33 *I am the letter a among the letters of the alphabet and the dvandva compound in relation to compound words collectively I am Myself endless time I am the creator with faces in all directions*

Among letters, I am the letter *a*, which is the basis of all letters as established in the Vedic text, "The letter *a*, indeed, is all speech" (*Aṣṭ Ar III 2 3*)<sup>519</sup> 'Sāmāsika' is the entire collection of compound words In it, I am the *dvandva* compound, for it is pre-eminent (among various types of compound words), on account of the meanings of both (its component) words being important<sup>520</sup>

518 That is, the individual self as well as the Supreme Self (*T C*).

519. The quoted text goes on "It is this which, becoming manifest through ploatives and spirants, grows abundant and takes many forms"

520. "If the first element in a compound word is more important, then we have the *avyayibhāva* If the second is more important, then we have the *sat-puruṣa* compound. If both the elements are unimportant and derive their meaning from a word not in the compound, then we have the *bakṣa-vṛthi* Finally, in the *dvandva*, each word is equally important. It is for this reason that it is considered the most worthy among the compounds" (*L G II*, p 289). The *dvandva* compound unites two words which, if uncompounded, would be in the same case and connected by the conjunction, 'and'.

I am Myself inexhaustible time, which is made up of (temporal units like) *kalā*, *muhūrta*, etc.<sup>521</sup> I am the fourfaced Hiraṇyagarbha, who is the creator of everything<sup>522</sup>

मृत्युस्सर्वहराहम् उद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।

कीर्तिश्च्रीर्वाक्च नारीणा स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥ ३४ ॥

34 I am also Death (*Mṛtyu*) that seizes all and the birth of things that are to be born Among women I am *Kīrti*, *Śrī*, *Vāk*, *Smṛti*, *Medhā*, *Dhṛti* and *Kṣamā*

I am also Death<sup>523</sup> which seizes the life of everyone In relation to those who are to be born, I am the activity called birth I am *Śrī* I am also *Kīrti* I am *Vāk* too And I am *Smṛti* I am also *Medhā* And I am *Dhṛti* And I am *Kṣamā*<sup>524</sup>

बृहत्साम तथा साम्ना गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।

मासाना मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृत्ना कुसुमाकर ॥ ३५ ॥

35 I am the *Bṛhatsāman* among the *Sāman* hymns and the *Gāyatrī* among Vedic metres I am *Mārgaśīrṣa* among months and the flowery spring among seasons

Of the *Sāman* hymns, I am the *Bṛhatsāman* Of metres I am the *Gāyatrī* *Kusumākara* (the flowery season) is the spring

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्व सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३६ ॥

36 In relation to (the transactions of) the deceitful, I am gambling. I am the splendour of the splendid I am (the) victory (of the victorious). I am (the) industry (of the industrious) I am the mental vigour of those possessed of mental vigour.

521. An echo from *V P* (IV. 1. 84).

522. Śrī Śaṅkara renders 'dātā' as the distributor of the fruits of *karma*.

523. A minion of Yama, charged with the task of taking away the lives of all, is referred to as *Mṛtyu* (*T C.*).

524. These are regarded as the powers of the Lord, the goddesses presiding over prosperity, fame, eloquence, memory, intelligence, endurance and forgiveness (*T C.*).

In relation to those that practise fraud, among all (their) transactions which are the grounds of fraud, I am gambling,<sup>525</sup> such as is characterised by dice-play, etc. I am the victory of the victorious. I am the industry of the industrious. The mental vigour of those possessed of mental vigour is high-mindedness.

वृष्णीना वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः ।

मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशनां कविः ॥ ३७ ॥

37 In relation to the *Vṛṣṇis* I am *Vāsudeva* among the *Pāṇḍavas*, (*I am*) *Arjuna* (*Dhanan̥jaya*) I am also *Vyāsa* among the meditative sages. I am the seer *Śukra* among the wise seers.

The subject of control here is the attribute of being the son of *Vasudeva*, because no other meaning is at all possible. Among *Pāṇḍavas* I am *Dhanan̥jaya*, that is, *Arjuna*. The meditative sages (*munis*) are those who perceive the truth about things through meditation. Among them I am *Vyāsa*. The seers are those who are wise and learned.

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।

मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ ३८ ॥

38 I am the punishment of those that punish. Of those that seek victory I am policy. I am also silence in relation to (the means for protecting) secrets. I am the wisdom of those who are wise.

I am the punishment of those who impose punishment in case of transgression of law. In relation to those that seek victory, I am the policy which forms the means for achieving victory. Among the methods of protection relating to secrets, I am silence. I am the wisdom of those who are wise.<sup>526</sup>

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।

न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ ३९ ॥

525 The importance of gambling is due to its capacity to seize the entire wealth of a person easily and without transgressing *dharma* (*T C*).

526. The *jñāna* mentioned here relates to the supreme end of life, as in *V. P.* (VI. 5. 87) (*T C*).

39. *I am also that which is the seed of all beings, O Arjuna. There is nothing, movable or immovable, that can exist without Me.*

That which in relation to all beings, existent in all states, forms the seed, whether perceived or unperceived (and inferred), of every one of their states, I alone am that <sup>527</sup> A class of beings which can exist without My remaining as the Self—it does not exist In the statement here, "There is nothing, movable and immovable, that can exist without Me," what is sought to be taught is the abidance by the Lord as the Self, as stated at the outset in, "I am the Self, O Arjuna (Gudākeśa), seated in the hearts of all embodied beings" (X 20) The meaning is that the entire aggregate of beings in all states are united with Me, who constitute their Self By this He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) makes it clear that the basis of indication by every grammatical equation here is the abidance of the Lord as the Self

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्याना विभूतीना परन्तप ।

एष तूद्देशत प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४० ॥

40 *There is no end, O Arjuna (Parantapa), to the wonderful objects of My will to rule Here the extent of the manifestation of the will (of Myself) to rule has been declared only in part by Me*

There is no end to the wonderful, that is, auspicious objects of My will to rule But this extent of the manifestation of the will (of Myself) to rule has been stated by Me in brief by means of a few characteristic instances

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्व मम तेजोशसभवम् ॥ ४१ ॥

41. *Whatever being is possessed of lordly power, or of splendour, or is energetic in noble endeavours, understand that to be sprung from a fraction of My irresistible power*

Whatever host of beings is possessed of lordly power, that is, has persons and things to rule over, is possessed of splendour, that is,

527. T. C points out that the Lord's role in *prākṛta* and *nasmitkṛta arpitā* having been referred to earlier, His role in *astya-arpi* is here mentioned.



has radiant beauty or is rich in gold and grains, is energetic, that is, is engaged in auspicious undertakings—understand every such being to be sprung from a fraction of My irresistible power. Irresistible power (*tejas*) is the ability to overcome enemies. The meaning is that it has for its source a part of the power of subduing and ruling, which belongs to Me who have unconceivable power

अथवा बहुनतेन किं ज्ञानेन त्वार्जुन ।

विष्टम्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकाशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२ ॥

42 *But what is the use to you from this extensive knowledge, O Arjuna? I stand controlling and regulating all this universe with but a fraction (of My power)*

What use is there from this extensive knowledge<sup>528</sup> which is being taught? I stand with the ten-thousandth part of a ten-thousandth part of My power (to rule), regulating and controlling all this universe, consisting of intelligent souls and non-intelligent matter, both in the condition of effect and in the condition of cause, both when gross and when subtle—(regulating and controlling this universe) in such a way that it does not transgress My will in preserving its essential nature, in continued existence and in varied activities. As declared by the venerable Parāśara “On a fraction of the ten-thousandth part of a ten-thousandth part of whom this energy, which is the universe, rests” (*V P I 9 53*)

528. Śrī Śaṅkara reads ‘*jāñāna*’ (by that which is known) for ‘*jñānena*’.

## CHAPTER XI

Thus, for the sake of bringing about the birth of the discipline of devotion and its development, the Lord's being the Self of all beings, as well as the host of His auspicious qualities which make (Him) distinct from all others, which are of His own nature and which are unique to the Lord, has been taught and thence, indeed, the entire aggregate of things (in the universe), consisting of intelligent souls and non-intelligent matter, which are distinct from Him, have their nature, continued existence and activities dependent on Him because of being His body.<sup>529</sup>

Having heard from the Lord of this (wonderful) nature which had been described and which is unique to the Lord, and of the whole universe as having its nature, existence and activity dependent on Him, and concluding that they are certainly so, Arjuna became desirous of seeing with his eyes the Lord as being thus, and spoke (to Him) Later, through the grace of the Lord, he will see (Him) exactly as described For it will be said later " (Arjuna saw the supreme sovereign form of the Lord) which was full of all wonders, with faces in all directions and there remaining in a particular place, the whole universe divided in various ways " (XI 11, 13)

**अर्जुन उवाच—**

मदनुग्रहाय परम गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत्त्वयोक्त वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*1 That speech which is (i e , teaches) the greatest secret, which is known to be concerned with the individual self and which has been spoken by you out of favour to me—by that, this delusion of mine has been removed completely*

For the sake only of showing favour to me,<sup>530</sup> who have been deluded by the delusion of misunderstanding the body to be the self,

529 Vide G S (14).

530 The teaching of the *Gītā* should not be understood to be merely for the sake of prodding Arjuna into taking part in the war (T C ).

whatever speech which is the greatest secret,<sup>531</sup> the highest mystery, which is known to be concerned with the self, that is, which is fit or proper to be said about the self, and which, commencing from "It is not at all that once I did not exist" (II 12) and ending with "Therefore, O Arjuna, do you become a *yogin*" (VI 46), has been spoken by You—by that (speech) this delusion of mine about the self is completely removed, that is, cast out far away

And likewise

भवाप्ययो हि भूतानां श्रुतो विस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्त कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

2 O *Kṛṣṇa* (*Kamalapatrākṣa*), the birth and dissolution of all beings as proceeding from You have been heard verily by me in detail, as also Your unlimited greatness

Similarly, in the chapters starting from the seventh and ending with the tenth, the birth and dissolution, that is, the origination and the death of all beings other than You as proceeding from You,<sup>532</sup> the Supreme Self, have been heard verily by me in detail Your unlimited greatness, which is indestructible, that is, eternal, O lotus-eyed, has also been heard as consisting of (You) being the master for whose gratification all animate and inanimate things exist, being supreme on account of a host of auspicious qualities like knowledge, strength, etc., and being the supporter of all things, and of You alone being the impeller of all activities like thinking, blinking, etc. Here the word, 'hi' ('verily'), is for indicating the desire to see (the lordly glory) which will be spoken about

एवमेतद्यथाऽऽत्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमेश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ३ ॥

3 O Highest Lord, as You have spoken about Yourself, so it is I wish, O Best of Persons, to see Your sovereign form

531 In Chapter IX, *bhakti-yoga* has been called a royal mystery. The knowledge relating to the self is an essential element in the discipline of devotion. So what applies to the latter is here attributed to the former also (T C).

532. Śrī Śaṅkara construes *tvattāḥ śrutam*, "heard from You"

O Highest Lord, it is determined that this is so, even as You have spoken about, that is, proclaimed Yourself to be O Best of Persons ! O ocean of maternal solicitude for those depending upon You !<sup>533</sup> I wish to see, that is, to see with my eyes,<sup>534</sup> Your sovereign form, which is unique to You, and which is manifest in Your being the ruler, being the protector, being the creator, being the destroyer and being the support of all, in being a mine of auspicious qualities, in being supreme and in being different in nature from all others

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ ४ ॥

4 If You think, O Lord, that it can be seen by me, then, O Lord of (auspicious) endowments, (please) show Yourself completely to me

If You think that this form of Yours, which is the creator of all, the ruler of all and the support of all, can be seen by me, then, O Lord of auspicious endowments—'Yoga' is association with knowledge and such other auspicious qualities<sup>535</sup> for it is said later on "See My sovereign yoga" (8)—O treasurehouse of knowledge, strength, sovereignty, valour, power and glory which are inconceivable in respect of anyone other than Yourself, show Yourself to me fully. 'Avyayam' ('completely') is an adverb<sup>536</sup> The meaning is, "Show everything about Yourself to me"

Thus, entreated by Arjuna (Pārtha), who was full of eagerness to know and whose voice was faltering with you, the Lord said

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽप्य सहस्रशः ।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णकृतीनि च ॥ ५ ॥

533. The vocative in the first line refers to the transcendent greatness of the Lord, that in the second line to His easy accessibility.

534. Seeing the Lord with the eyes—*akṣaṅkṣā*—here refers not merely to ocular perception, but to direct realisation (T O)

535. Śrī Śaṅkara understands by 'yogeshvara' 'lord of the yogins'

536. 'Avyayam' is taken as 'eternal' by Śrī Śaṅkara : it is made to qualify

## THE LORD SAID

5. See My forms, O Arjuna (Pārtha), in (their) hundreds and (their) thousands, various, divine and of different colours and shapes

See My forms which form the support for all things Hence, in (their) thousands and in (their) hundreds they are various, that is, possessed of varied attributes They are divine, that is, supernatural. They are of different shapes and colours They are of various colours like white, black, etc and they are of various configurations. See (them all)

पश्यादित्यान्वसून् रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।

बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याभ्र्याणि भारत ॥ ६ ॥

6 See the Ādityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the two Āsvins and so, too, the Maruts See, O Arjuna, many marvels unseen before

See in My one form<sup>537</sup> the twelve Ādityas, the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the two Āsvins and the forty-nine Maruts This (reference to particular gods) is illustrative (and for the purpose of indicating all others like them) See all those things which have been seen in this world directly and those seen from the *sāstras*, and also others which have not been seen before in all the worlds and in all the *sāstras*,<sup>538</sup> and which are many marvels

इहैकस्थ जगत्कृत्स्न पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।

मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ७ ॥

7 See now, O Arjuna (Guḍākeśa), the whole universe with all that lives and moves and the things that do not live and move brought together here in one place in My body, and (see also) whatever else you wish to see

Here, in this one body of Mine, and even there, remaining in one place, that is, brought together in one part (thereof), see the

537. Though hundreds and thousands of forms have been mentioned in the previous stanza, only one is to be specially shown to Arjuna and this is referred to (T C)

538 " There are many particulars capable of direct realisation in the reality beyond the senses which is learnt about in a general way from the *sāstras* " (T. C.).

whole universe with all that lives and moves and the things that do not live and move. Whatever else you wish to see,<sup>539</sup> that too see in one part of one body alone

न तु मा शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।

दिव्य ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ ८ ॥

8 But you will not be able to see Me (in this form) with only this eye of your own I (therefore) give you a divine eye See My sovereign endowments (with its help)

I shall make you see the whole universe in one part of My body But, with this eye of yours, which can perceive (only) such finite objects as lie within its limited range, and is material, you will not be able to see Me who am of a nature distinct from all others and illimitable I give you a divine, that is, a supernatural eye, which is the means for seeing Me See the sovereign endowments of Mine see My unique endowment The meaning is, "See My association with infinite knowledge and such other (auspicious) qualities and My association with infinite manifestations of sovereign power"

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन् महायोगेश्वरो हरि ।

दर्शयामास पार्थाय परम रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ९ ॥

SANJAYA SAID

9 Having spoken thus, O King, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hari), the master of great qualities, then showed to Arjuna (Pārtha) the supreme sovereign form:

Having spoken thus, the Lord (Hari) who is the master of great qualities, that is, the master of highly wonderful qualities with which He is associated, who is Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Brahman, who was the son of Arjuna's maternal uncle and who was engaged in working as a charioteer, showed that supreme sovereign form.<sup>540</sup> which is

539. Such as whether Arjuna's side will win or lose (Śrī Śaṅkara)

540 'Form' has to be taken to mean (i) the Self of the Lord with associated things like individual selves, matter, His own body and His qualities, or (ii) a form which manifests all these, or (iii) all the attributes of the Lord collectively (T. C.)

exclusively His own, on which is dependant the varied and manifold universe in all its entirety and which is as the ruler of the universe, to Arjuna (Pārtha), the son of Prthā, His paternal aunt <sup>541</sup>

And this form was like this

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।

अनेकदिव्याभरण दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधर दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।

सर्वाभ्यर्चय देवमनन्त विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ ११ ॥

10 Having many mouths and eyes, many wonderful aspects, many divine ornaments, and many divine weapons held erect

11 Wearing divine garlands and apparel, anointed with celestial perfumes, full of all wonders, <sup>542</sup> resplendent, infinite and with faces in all directions

'Devam' means 'resplendent'

(The form is) infinite in the sense that it is incapable of being limited by place and time on account of its forming the support of the entire universe and persisting throughout triple time (i.e., the past, the present and the future) 'Vīśvatomukham' means 'with faces in all directions' (The form has) divine apparel, perfumes, garlands, ornaments and weapons suitable to it

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) further explains that same resplendence which has been indicated by the word, 'deva'

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।

यदि भास्वदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२ ॥

12 If the splendour of a thousand suns were to rise up, all at once, in the heavens, it would be (somewhat) like the splendour of that Mighty One

<sup>541</sup> Arjuna's mother, Prthā, was the sister of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's father, Vasudeva. See *M B* (I. 68 129)

<sup>542</sup> The form is full of wonders because the categories of the universe are all wonders and are dependant on Him (*T C*).

This is for the purpose of showing that His splendour is infinite. The meaning is that it (i.e., the form) is of the nature of undiminishing light

तत्रैकस्य जगत्कृत्स्न प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।

अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ १३ ॥

13 In the body of the God of gods, Arjuna (Pāṇḍava) then saw there remaining in a particular place the whole universe divided in various ways

There, in the supernatural body of the God of gods, which is infinite in length and extent, which has countless stomachs, faces and eyes, the splendour of whose light is beyond measure, which has countless divine weapons, which has countless divine ornaments suitable to itself, is wearing divine garlands and apparel, is anointed with celestial perfumes, and is full of all wonders—in that body the son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna), with the eyes obtained through the grace of the Lord and suitable for seeing Him, saw the whole universe consisting of the *prakṛti* and the selves, remaining in one place, that is, in one (small) portion, (he saw it as) divided in various ways, differentiated into the varied and amazing classes of enjoyers with Brahmā at the head and including the gods, animals, men, immovable things and the like, and the places of enjoyments, such as the earth, the mid-world above, *Swarga*, *Pātāla*, *Atala*, *Vitala*, *Sutala*, and such other worlds, and also enjoyments and instruments of enjoyment (he saw thus the whole universe) as described in such passages as those beginning with, “I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me” (X 8), “Right gladly will I tell you the auspicious objects of My will to rule” (X 19), “I am the Self, O Guḍākeśa, seated in the hearts of all embodied beings” (X 20), and “I am Viṣṇu among the Ādityas . . .” (X. 21), and ending with “There is nothing, movable or unmovable, that can exist without Me” (X. 39.), and “I stand controlling and regulating all this universe with but a fraction (of My power)” (X 42)

ततस्स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥ १४ ॥



*14. Then he, Arjuna (Dhananjaya), overcome by wonder, and with hair standing on end, bowed his head (lit with his head) before the Lord, and with folded hands, thus spoke*

Then Arjuna (Dhananjaya), having seen the Lord, who constitutes the support of the highly wonderful universe in its entirety with but a part of His own body, who causes all things to act and who has a host of auspicious qualities like the most wonderful and infinite knowledge, became overcome by wonder. With hair standing on end, he bowed down his head, (falling down on the ground) like a stick, and with folded hands, thus spoke

पश्यामि देवास्तव देव देहे सर्वास्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।

ब्रह्माणमीश कमलासनस्थमृषीञ्च सर्वानुरगाञ्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*15 I see, O Lord, in Your body all- the gods, as well as all the groups of various beings, Brahmā (the creator), Śiva who is in Brahmā, the sages and the snakes of flaming lustre* <sup>543</sup>

O Lord ! I see in Your body all the gods, as well as all the groups of various kinds of living beings similarly Brahma of four faces who rules over the egg-shaped universe so too Śiva (Īśa) who is *kamalāsanaṣṭha*, who is in Brahmā whose seat is the lotus, that is, Śiva who loyally accepts the opinion of Brahmā <sup>544</sup> so also all the seers of whom the divine sages are the foremost and the snakes of flaming lustre like Vāsuki, Takṣaka and others

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्र पश्यामि त्वा सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।

नान्त न मध्य न पुनस्तवादि पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६ ॥

*16. Everywhere I see You of boundless form, with many arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes O Lord of the universe, with the universe for Your form, I do not see Your end, nor Your middle, nor yet Your beginning*

<sup>543</sup> The last word in the stanza is read by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'divyān' and by Śrī Rāmānuja as 'dīptān'

<sup>544</sup> *Kamalāsanaṣṭha* is explained by Śrī Śaṅkara as Brahmā, seated on Mt. Meru, which forms as it were the seed-vessel for the lotus of the earth. 'Īśaṁ' is taken as descriptive of Brahmā who is the ruler of the creatures created by him.

I see You everywhere—<sup>545</sup> (You) who are of boundless form and who have many arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes. O Lord of the universe, with the universe for Your form, that is, O Ruler of the universe, having as Your body the universe, because You are infinite, therefore I do not see Your end, nor your middle, nor yet your beginning

किरीटिन गदिन चक्रिण च तेजोराशि सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।

पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष समन्ताद्दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७ ॥

17 I see You with a crown, a mace, and a discus, a mass of light, resplendent everywhere, difficult to look at anywhere, effulgent like the brightness of the blazing fire and the sun, and undefinable and immeasurable

I see You who are a mass of light, resplendent everywhere, difficult to look at anywhere, effulgent like the brightness of the blazing fire and the sun, (You) who are undefinable and immeasurable, wearing a crown, carrying a mace and holding a discus <sup>546</sup>

त्वमक्षर परम वेदितव्य त्वमस्य विश्वस्य पर निधानम् ।

त्वमव्ययश्शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्व पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८ ॥

18 You are the Indestructible, the Supreme One, He who is to be known You are the supreme abode of this universe You are inexhaustible, the protector of perpetual dharma My conviction is that You are the External Purusa

The Supreme Indestructible Entity pointed out as that which ought to be known in such *Upaniṣadic* texts, as "Two sciences are to be known" (*Mund Up I 1 4*)<sup>547</sup> is You alone The supreme abode of this universe, that is, what constitutes the supreme support

545 'Sarvatah' is connected by Śrī Śaṅkara with 'anantarūpam'

546. The crown, the mace and the discus help Arjuna to identify the Lord even in this strange form unseen before (T C)

547. The passage quoted runs thus "He (the preceptor) said to him (s e, Śaunaka) - "(It is) That (*Brahman* for attaining) which those who know the *Vedas* say that there are, in fact, two sciences to be known, namely, the undeniably higher one and similarly, the lower (one) Of these the lower comprises the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, the *Ātharvaveda*, phonetics, the code of liturgy, grammar, etymology, prosody and astronomy And that is the higher (knowledge) by which that Indestructible Being is known (directly)" (*Mund Up. I. 1. 4-5*)

of this universe is You alone You are inexhaustible, that is, not liable to decline. Of whatever nature, quality or dominion You are, You remain always with that same form The protector of perpetual *dharma*, that is, he who protects the eternal *dharma* of the (eternal) *Veda* with the help of incarnations like this, is You alone My conviction is that You are the Eternal *Puruṣa* You have been regarded,<sup>548</sup> that is, known by me as the Eternal *Puruṣa* described in such texts as "I know this great *Puruṣa*" (*Taitt Ar* III 12 7) and "(That Divine) Person who is the highest" (*Mund Up* III 2 8) The meaning is "You, who are the ornament (lit *tilaka*) of Yadu's race, have been cognised through direct perception by me now as of this nature"<sup>549</sup>

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यमनन्तबाहु शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।

पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्र स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९ ॥

19 I see You beginningless, middleless and endless, of infinite valour, having courtless arms, with eyes like the sun and the moon, with mouths like blazing fire, and oppressing this universe with Your glory

I see You beginningless, middleless, and endless, that is, without beginning, middle or end of infinite valour, that is, of valour the excellence of which cannot be surpassed Here the word, 'valour' (*vīrya*), is for the purpose of illustration The meaning is "(You) who are the treasurehouse of knowledge, strength, sovereignty, valour, power and glory the excellence of which cannot be surpassed" (I see You) having countless arms, that is, having arms too numerous to be counted This too is for the purpose of illustration (The meaning is) (You) having an infinite number of arms, stomachs, feet, mouths, etc (I see You) with eyes like the moon and the sun,<sup>550</sup> that is, with all eyes moonlike and sunlike, being associated with grace and punishing prowess The grace is towards these devoted to You, such as the gods, who perform obeisance and similar acts The punishing prowess is towards Asuras, Rākṣasas and others who are

548 'Mataḥ' in the verse does not express mere opinion or belief in this context it is ascertained knowledge

549 In this verse, 'You' refers to the form of Kṛṣṇa seen in the past by Arjuna with his physical eyes the description applies to the form now being seen with divine eyes (T, C)

550. Śrī-Śaṅkara renders "with the sun and the moon as eyes".

the opposite to these (i.e., the gods, etc.) For it will be taught later as follows: "The demons flee in terror in all directions, and all the hosts of the Siddhas bow down (to You)" (XI. 36) (I see You) with mouths like blazing fire,<sup>551</sup> that is, with mouths suitable for destroying (all things) and looking like the terribly blazing fire at the time of the dissolution of the universe. (I see You) oppressing this universe with Your glory. Glory (*tejas*) is the power to overcome enemies. (The meaning is) I see You oppressing this universe by Your own glory.

The purport is "I see You with my eyes as in the teaching given—as the creator of everything, as one who forms the support of everything, as the ruler of everything, as the destroyer of everything, as the ocean, of knowledge and similar infinite (auspicious) qualities, as without a beginning, a middle and an end, and as having a divine body of this kind."

In one divine body, how can there be many stomachs, etc.? This is possible in the following manner. From a single hip of infinite extent, stomachs and other organs described rise upwards. The divine feet and similar organs as described (emerge) downwards. Hence there is no contradiction in speaking of a pair of eyes in each face.

He (Arjuna) says (here) "On seeing You to be thus, the gods, others like them and I myself have become greatly agitated (and alarmed)."

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि व्याप्त त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वा ।

दृष्ट्वाऽद्भुत रूपमुग्र तवेद लोकत्रय प्रव्यथित महात्मन् ॥ २० ॥

20 For this interspace between heaven and earth, and all the quarters are pervaded by You alone. Seeing this wonderful and terrible form of Yours, the three worlds have become greatly agitated (and alarmed), O High-souled One.

The word, 'heaven', and the word, 'earth', are intended to point out all the upper and nether worlds. The *antara* between heaven and earth is the space (between them) in which space stand

551. "With the blazing fire as the mouth", according to Śrī Śaṅkara.

all the worlds All this space and all the quarters are pervaded by  
You alone

Seeing this wonderful and terrible form of Yours, the form which is infinite in length and extent, extremely wonderful and extremely terrible, the three worlds are in a state of great agitation That is among those who have come with a desire to see the battle, such as the gods, the manes, the Siddhas, the Gandharvas, the Yaksas and the Rakṣasas, all the three 'worlds' (i.e., groups), consisting of those that are unfavourable, those that are favourable and those that are neutral, are extremely agitated, that is, extremely frightened "O High-souled One" means "O Being the working of whose mind cannot be defined" <sup>552</sup>

To these also, as to Arjuna, the divine eye, which forms the means for directly seeing the form that is the support of the universe, was given by the Lord If it be asked for what purpose, this was done, (the answer is that) it was for the sake of showing all His sovereignty to Arjuna <sup>553</sup> Hence it is said here "Seeing this wonderful and terrible form of Yours, the three worlds are extremely agitated, O High-souled One"

अमी हि त्वा मुरसङ्घा विशन्ति केचिद्धीता प्राञ्जलयो गुणन्ति ।

स्वस्तोत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घा स्तुवन्ति त्वा स्तुतिभि पुष्कलाभि ॥

21 *These hosts of gods indeed enter You Some in fear praise You with folded hands And the hosts of great sages and Siddhas, saying "Hail to you", extol You with perfect eulogies*

These hosts of gods, who are exalted, seeing You as the support of the universe, become pleased in mind and enter Your vicinity Among them alone, some in fear at seeing Your extremely terrible and extremely wonderful form, speak, that is, pronounce sentences which are in the form of praise in proportion to their knowledge

552. The unfathomed mind of the Lord is as much a cause of fear as His terrible form (T C)

553. The desire to see the universal form of the Lord can come to the gods as to Arjuna the auspicious *karmas* of many may ripen for fruition simultaneously to bring about a glimpse of the universal form on the part of all of them, even as such fruition happens in the case of those contemporaneous with an incarnation of the Lord the display of fear by the high as well as the low is helpful in the present context in demonstrating the unimpeded sovereignty of the Lord All these explain the gift of the divine eye to so many (T. C.).

Others—hosts of great sages and hosts of Siddhas who know the truth about what is high and what is low—saying, “Hail to You”,<sup>554</sup> extol (You) with eulogies which are perfect, that is, fit and proper for the Lord.

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।

गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा वीक्षन्ते त्वा विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥ २२ ॥

22 The Rudras and the Ādityas, the Vasus, and those who are Sādhyas, the Viśvas, the Āsvins, the Maruts and the manes, and hosts of Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Āsuras and Siddhas are all looking at You amazed

Uṣmapas are the manes, for the Śruti declares “The manes are indeed the receivers of the hot portions of the offerings” (Trautt Br. I 3 10) All these, overwhelmed by wonder, see You

रूप महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्र महाबाहो बहुबाहुरूपादम् ।

बहूदर बहुदंष्ट्राकराल दृष्ट्वा लोका. प्रव्यथितास्तथाऽहम् ॥ २३ ॥

23 Seeing Your mighty form with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and fierce with many large teeth, (the denizens of) all the worlds, O mighty-armed, are extremely agitated, so am I

Seeing this form of Yours, which is such as described and which is a highly terrifying figure on account of (its) many large teeth, (all the denizens of) all the worlds without exception, who have been described above and are of three kinds, as consisting of those who are favourable, those who are unfavourable and those who are neutral, and I also have become extremely agitated

नभस्स्पृश दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्तानन दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।

दृष्ट्वा हि त्वा प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥

24 For seeing You, O Viṣṇu, touching the Highest Heaven, shining, of many colours, with gaping mouths and with large blazing eyes, I am extremely agitated in my inmost soul and do not find support, nor peace.

554. ‘*Svasti*’ is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara to mean, “May it be well (with the world)”.

The word, 'nabhas' ('heaven' or 'sky'), denotes the Highest Heaven (*Parama-vyoman*), which is beyond the *prakṛti* of the three *gunas*, as established by *Śruti* texts like the following "That (*Brahman*) is in the imperishable Highest Heaven" (*M Nār* 1 2) "Him who is of sunlike lustre and is beyond *tanuṣ*" (*Taitt Ar* III 12 9), "Him who dwells beyond this world (*rajas*)" (*Taitt Sam* II 2 12 5) and 'He who presides over this in the Highest Heaven' (*R* 1 X 129 7) This is because the statement, that the form touches Heaven, indicates that it is the support of everything, of the principle of the *prakṛti* with its modifications and of the individual self in all states, and also because it has already been stated "For the interspace between heaven and earth is pervaded" (XI 20) Seeing You who are shining and of many colours, whose mouths are gaping, whose large eyes are blazing I am extremely agitated in my inmost soul, that is I have become extremely alarmed in mind I do not find support that is I do not get (*i e*, feel) support for the body I do not find peace of the mind and the senses O Viṣṇu, that is, O Pervader, seeing You pervading everything, infinite in magnitude, extremely wonderful and extremely terrible, I find my limbs loose and weak and my senses ruffled Such is the meaning

दष्टाकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।

दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ २५ ॥

25 Seeing Your mouths fierce with fangs, and resembling the fire of cosmic destruction I cannot recognise the (various) directions and I feel no comfort Be gracious O Lord of the gods, O home of the universe

After seeing Your mouths which are highly dreadful and which like the cosmic conflagration at the end of (the appropriate number of) *yugas* are engaged in the destruction of everything, I cannot recognise the directions of space and I feel no comfort O home of all the worlds! O Lord of the gods, that is, O great lord of even lords like *Brahmā*! be gracious to me The meaning is "Act in such a way that I may attain (again) my normal state"

The charioteer of Arjuna (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), having thus shown that all the worlds depend on Him for their existence and activities, proceeded to show to the son of Prthā (Arjuna) that what was desired by Him and would (presently) be done by Himself was the removal

of the burden of the earth by the laughter of all those, who were partial manifestations of Asuras and who, remaining in the deceptive form of kings, were followers of Dhrtarāstra and had also infiltrated among the followers of Yudhishthira. And that son of Prithā (Arjuna), after directly seeing the full glory of the Lord as comprised in His being the creator, etc., saw by the eye obtained through His grace the destruction of the followers of Dhrtarāstra and others in that Lord Himself, who is the Self of all, even though it (the destruction) had not yet taken place. And he said this:

अमी सर्वे धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्रास्सर्वेस्सहैवावनिपालसङ्घे ।

भीष्मो द्रोणस्सूतपुत्रस्तथाऽसौ सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥ २६ ॥

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दष्टाकरालानि भयानकानि ।

केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु सदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥ २७ ॥

26 All these sons of Dhrtarāstra<sup>555</sup> with all the bands of kings, Bhīṣma, Droṇa as also the son of the charioteer (Karna) along with many even of our important warriors

27 Enter speedily into Your mouths, fierce with fangs and fearful Some, with their heads ground to powder are seen sticking in the interspaces between the teeth

All these sons of Dhrtarāstra headed by Duryodhana Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and Karna the son of the charioteer together with all the bands of kings belonging to their side and also with even some of the important warriors on our side, are hastening on, and to their destruction, they enter Your mouth fierce with fangs and fearful. There some are seen sticking in the interspaces between the teeth with their heads ground to powder <sup>556</sup>

यथा नदीना बहवोऽम्बुवेगास्समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।

तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥ २८ ॥

555 Śrī Śaṅkara reads: *Ami ca team* for *Ami sarve*. This would necessitate a verb for the verse, and *vānti* from the next verse is taken for the purpose.

556 T' C gives four verses after this as having been commented on by Yādaṇḍaprakāśa. It is also stated that of these three are in Nārāyaṇārya's text of the *Gītā* and have been commented on by him. But these are not included in the text of the three great *ācāryas*, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva.



यथा प्रदीप्तज्वलन पतङ्गा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगा ।

तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगा ॥ २९ ॥

28 As the many swift currents of rivers flow towards the sea alone, so these heroes of the world of men enter Your flaming mouths

29 As moths with accelerated velocity enter a blazing fire to their destruction, so too do (these) men enter Your mouths with accelerated velocity, to their destruction

These hosts of kings hasten on and enter, to their own destruction, Your fiercely blazing mouths even as the many swift currents<sup>557</sup> of rivers enter the sea and moths enter a blazing fire<sup>558</sup>

लेलिह्यसे ग्रममानस्समन्ताल्लोकान् समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।

तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्र भासस्तवोग्रा प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥ ३० ॥

30 Swallowing all these men all around with Your fiery mouths, You are licking over and over again Your lips O Vignu Your fierce rays, filling the whole universe with (their) splendour are burning it

Swallowing all these hosts of king, with Your fiery mouths You lick, that is lick up over and over again, Your lips and other places in the mouths wet with their blood on account of the force of Your anger Your very fierce *bhāṣah*, that is, rays, by (their) splendour, that is by their own bright glow fill the whole world and burn it

आख्याहि मे को भवानृग्रूपो नमोस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।

विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्य नहि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥ ३१ ॥

31 Tell me who You are who are possessed of a fierce form Salvation to You O best of gods Be kind I wish to know You, the Primeval One I do not understand Your activity

This very terrible form has been shown by You when revealing Your unimpeded sovereignty You having been requested by me, in order to see directly Your unimpeded sovereignty, thus “ (Please)

557 Verse 28 has *amburegal*, which is explained in the commentary as ‘*ambupravāhā*’. Both ‘*vega*’ and ‘*pravāha*’ mean ‘current’ or ‘stream’

558 The simile of the rivers indicates that destruction cannot be averted by the victims efforts that of the moths shows voluntary entry into death (T C)

show Yourself completely to me" (XI 4) I wish to know You, that is, (to know) who You are possessed of this very terrible form, what You have undertaken to do <sup>559</sup> I do not understand the activity You have in view Please tell me this Salutation to You, best of gods! Be kind That is, salutation to You, Lord of all Please explain for doing what and for which purpose this form of the destroyer has been shown, and assume a calm and agreeable form

The Lord acting as the charioteer of Pārtha (Arjuna), having been asked, "What is Your intention in manifesting a terrible form by You, when showing Your universal sovereignty out of excessive love to one who has sought refuge with You?" thus spoke about His intention The manifestation by Me of a terrible form is to bring home to the mind (of Arjuna) that I Myself have embarked upon the destruction of the entire band of kings, headed by the son of Dhritrāstra even without any effort on the part of Arjuna (Pārtha) And this bringing home to the mind (of Arjuna) is to incite Arjuna (Pārtha) (to fight)

**श्रीभगवानुवाच—**

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान् समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत् ।

ऋतेऽपि त्वा न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिता प्रत्यनीकेषु योधा ॥ ३२ ॥

THE LORD SAID

32 I am the reckoner, Time, causing the destruction of the world Fully developed, I am here engaged in directly destroying men Even without you, all these the warriors who remain in the enemy forces, shall cease to be

*Kāla* (time) is the reckoner, that which reckons (*kalayati*) <sup>560</sup> Reckoning the end of life of all those under the leadership of the

<sup>559</sup> According to Sri Madhva, Arjuna asks Sri Kṛṣṇa who He is with a view to learn about His other and unknown attributes T C refers to a peculiar explanation advanced by some to the effect that Arjuna is wondering whether some demon has superimposed his own form on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's

<sup>560</sup> T C points out that the grammatical equation here is based on the etymological derivation of *kāla*, as in the case of the word, 'akāśa', dealt with in S B (I 1 23) According to Śrī Madhva, 'kāla' indicates several attributes of the Lord and describes Him as binding or destroying or enlightening the world, or as abounding in excellence

sons of Dhritarāstra, I am bringing about their destruction. Fully developed with a terrible form, I am here engaged in directly destroying (*samāhartum*) the bands of kings. Hence, by means solely of My will and even without you that is even without any effort of yours, (all) these, the warriors who remain under the leadership of the sons of Dhritarāstra in the enemy forces opposed to you they shall cease to be, that is, shall perish.

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्व राज्य समृद्धम् ।  
मयैवैते निहता पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्र भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ ३३ ॥

33 Therefore, do you get up. Win fame. Conquering your enemies, enjoy a prosperous kingdom. All these indeed have been killed by Me already. Be merely an instrument. O Arjuna (*Savyasāchin*) (for their destruction).

Therefore, do you get up for fighting against them. Conquering these enemies, win fame, and enjoy a prosperous kingdom, (won and governed) in accordance with righteousness. All these transgressors have been already, indeed, killed by Me alone that is, they have been assigned to destruction<sup>561</sup>. But be merely an instrument in killing them. That is in respect of those who are being killed by Me, take the place of such things as weapons, O *Savyasāchin*! The root, 'śach' (or 'sach'), means 'bringing together'. A *savyasāchin* is one who is capable of bringing together the arrow (and the bow) on the left that is, one who can bring together the arrow (and the bow) by means even of his left hand. The meaning is that he is capable of fighting with both hands.

द्रोण च भीष्म च जयद्रथ च  
कर्णं तथाऽन्यानपि योषमुख्यान् ।  
मया हतास्त्व जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा  
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥ ३४ ॥

34 Do you slay Drona and Bhīṣma and Jayadratha and Karna and likewise other heroic warriors, who have been killed by Me. Grieve not. Fight. You will be victorious over the enemies in the war.

561 This means that the Lord has resolved upon their destruction (T. C.).

Do you slay (*jahi*) Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Karna and others, who have been assigned to destruction by Me alone, for having committed transgressions.<sup>502</sup> Grieve not, thinking, "How shall I kill these elders, kinsmen and such others, devoted to enjoyments?" Do not grieve in relation to them through fearing righteousness to be unrighteousness, out of love for kinsmen or out of pity. Because men who have committed these transgressions have been assigned to destruction by Me alone. Therefore fight without any doubt. In the battle, you will overcome, will at once conquer<sup>503</sup> the enemies. There is not the slightest trace of villainy in killing them. The meaning is that only victory will be won.

**सञ्जय उवाच—**

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरोटी ।

नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्ण सगद्गद भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५ ॥

SANJAYA SAID

35 Hearing this speech of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Keshava), Arjuna (Kiritin) prostrated himself and overcome by great fear, he bowed down again, and with folded hands and trembling, he spoke to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a faltering voice.

Hearing this speech of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Keshava), who is the ocean of affection for those who seek refuge with Him, Arjuna prostrated himself before Him. Overcome by great fear, he again bowed down before Him. With folded hands and trembling Kiritin<sup>504</sup> (Arjuna) said (as follows) in a faltering voice.

**अर्जुन उवाच—**

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।

रक्षासि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घा ॥ ३६ ॥

502 Jayadratha and Karna had approved of Duryodhana's crimes against the Pāṇḍavas. In addition to this, Jayadratha had also on one occasion attempted to kidnap Draupadī. These two were thus transgressors. As regards Bhīṣma and Droṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took the view that they were accountable for failure to restrain Duryodhana. Vide *M B* (V 113-35).

503 'Jethan' is glossed as 'jeerous'. Compare Note 78.

504. The crowned head of Arjuna realises the purpose of crowning when it prostrates itself before the feet of the Lord (*T C*). Kiritin means one wearing a crown.

## ARJUNA SAID

36 O Kṛṣṇa (*Hṛṣīkeśa*) 'very properly does the world rejoice at and fall into love with the praise of Yourself (very properly too) terrified Rākṣasas flee in all directions and all the hosts of Siddhas bow down (to You) <sup>565</sup>

Very properly (*sthāne*), that is, it is but right that the world, consisting of all the gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Kimpurusas and others who had come (to the battlefield) with the desire to see the fight, after seeing You as the Lord of all through Your grace, should all rejoice at the praise of Yourself and fall in love with it <sup>566</sup> (it is but right) that, after seeing You, the Rākṣasas should get frightened and flee in all directions and that all the hosts of Siddhas, that is, hosts of friendly beings like the Siddhas, should bow down (to You) The relationship with what has been stated earlier is that all this is proper

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) further explains how all this is, indeed, proper

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन् महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणाऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।

37 And why should they not, O high-souled one! bow down to You who are great, and are the first being and the creator even of Brahmā (the fourfaced creator) ?

O high-souled one! for what reason should Bṛchinā and others not bow down to You, who are great and are the first (being) and the cause even of Brahmā, that is, of Hiraṇyagarbha the creator ?

अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षर मदसत्तत्पर यत् ॥ ३७ ॥

त्वमादिदेव पुरुष पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य पर निधानम् ।

37 O Boundless One, Lord of the gods, O You who have the universe for Your dwelling place! You are the indestructible individual self, (matter which is both) the existent and the non-existent, and that (emancipated self) which is above these

565 T. C. points out that this verse is used as a *mantra* in *Vijaya-pañjara* and other *ślotras*

566 'Prahṛasyate' refers to the gladness arising from such things as the arrival of a beloved guest, while 'anurasyate' suggests love as of children towards their parents (T. C.)

38. *You are the First God and the Ancient Purusa You are the highest support of this universe*

O Boundless One, O Lord of the gods, O You who have the universe for Your dwelling place! You are the *akṣara*, that which does not perish is the *akṣara*, that is, the ultimate principle of the individual self For the individual self does not perish, as may be made out from the following and other *Śruti* texts "The intelligent self is not born, nor does it die" (*Kaṭ Up* II 18)

You alone are both the existent and the non-existent The ultimate principle of matter (the *prakṛti*), in its states as effect and as cause, is denoted by the words, '*sat*' (that which is) and '*asat*' (that which is not)<sup>567</sup> You are both the state as effect (of the *prakṛti*) which is denoted by the word '*sat*' on account of its being capable of division into names and forms, and also the causal state (of the *prakṛti*), which is denoted by the word, '*asat*', on account of its being incapable of such division What is above them, what is above that *prakṛti* and the individual self in association with the *prakṛti*, and is other than them, namely the category of the emancipated soul- You alone are that also

Therefore, You are the First God, the Ancient *Purusa* You are the highest support of the universe Because the universe rests in You, therefore You are the highest support of the universe<sup>568</sup> The meaning is that You alone constitute the highest support to the universe, which constitutes Your body on account of Your being its Self

वेत्ताऽसि वेद्य च पर च धाम त्वया तत् विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥ ३८ ॥

38 *You are the knower, the object of knowledge and the supreme goal O Lord of infinite forms, this universe is pervaded by You*

All the knowers and all the objects of knowledge in the universe are You alone The meaning is You alone, who thus remain the

567 Śrī Śaṅkara takes '*sat*' and '*asat*' to be the concepts of existence and non-existence which seek to limit the unconditioned Absolute

568 "Where the universe rests during the great dissolution and similar conditions", according to Śrī Śaṅkara T C refers to an interpretation of '*nidhāna*' as '*avyakta*'

Self of all, are the supreme *dhāman* or goal, that is, the place of attainment. By You, O being of infinite forms, the universe is pervaded. By You the universe, the world consisting of intelligent souls and non-intelligent matter, is *tatam* pervaded

He (Arjuna) says ‘ Therefore, You alone are denoted by words like *Vāyu* ”

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणश्शशङ्क प्रजापतिस्त्व प्रपितामहश्च ।

39. You are *Vāyu*, *Yama*, *Agni* *Varuna*, the moon,<sup>569</sup> *Prajāpati* and the great-grandfather

You alone are the great-grandfather of all and also the grandfather, etc. The *Prajāpatis* (such as *Dakṣa*) are the fathers of all created beings. *Brahmā* (*Hiranyagarbha*), the father of the *Prajāpatis*, is the grandfather of all created beings. You, being the father even of *Brahmā*, are the great-grandfather of created beings. The meaning is that, on account of being the Self of the grandfather and others, You alone are denoted by the several words about them

नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्व पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥ ३९ ॥

नम पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।

39. *Salutations salutations to You a thousand times, and yet again and again salutation salutation to You*

40. *Salutations to You in front and from behind Salutations to You from all sides, O You who are all things*

Arjuna seeing the Lord in an extremely wonderful form, and with his eyes widely open (like a blossomed flower) from joy and bowing down in great awe,<sup>570</sup> prostrated on all sides

अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्व सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वं ॥ ४० ॥

40. *O Being of infinite power, You are of unmeasured heroism You pervade all, and therefore You are all*

569 The identification of the Lord with *Vāyu*, *Yama*, etc., recalls *R. V* (I 164 46), *M. Nār.* (I. 7) and such scriptural texts (*T. C.*)

570 The universal form of the Lord indicates both His transcendence and easy accessibility. The former frightens while the latter gladdens *Arjuna* (*T. C.*)

O being of infinite power, being whose power cannot be measured, You are of measureless heroism.<sup>571</sup> You pervade everything by being the Self hence, You are all. The meaning is that You alone are denoted by every word For You have everything for Your mode, on account of all the host of intelligent and non-intelligent things being Your modes by reason of their constituting Your body. In the passage, "O being of infinite forms, by You the universe is pervaded" (XI 38) and "You pervade all things therefore You are all" (XI 40) it has been stated very clearly that pervasion by being the Self is the only reason for the statement of identity with all things by way of grammatical equations, as in the passages, "You are the indestructible (individual self), (matter which is both) the existent and the non-existent" (XI 37) and "You are Vāyu, Yama, Agni" (XI 39)

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभ यदुक्त हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।

अजानता महिमान तवेद मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वाऽपि ॥ ४१ ॥

यच्चोपहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।

एकोऽथवाऽप्यच्युत तत्समक्ष तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥ ४२ ॥

41 Not knowing this<sup>572</sup> greatness of Yours, and either through want of consideration or through affection looking upon You as a friend, whatever has been said by me rudely such as (addressing You as) "O Kṛṣṇa, O Yādava, O friend",

42 And whatever disrespect has been shown to You in fun, while playing, reclining, sitting together or dining, whether alone or in the presence of (companions)—for all these, O being from whom there can be no fall, I crave pardon of You who are immeasurable

Your greatness is such that it consists of infinite power, un-measured heroism being the Inner Self of all, being the creator and similar glories by me who did not know this, thinking of You as a friend, whether out of want of consideration, that is, out of delusion,

571 Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'anantavīryātmakrama' as one word. He renders 'vīrya' as 'ātmārthya', (capacity), distinguishing it from 'vīratama', which is glossed as 'parākrama' (valour)

572. There are two readings, *tavedaṁ* and *tavedam*. Both are referred to by Śrī Śaṅkara, Śrī Rāmānuja reads *tavedam*, and Śrī Śaṅkara *tavedaṁ*.



or through affection, that is, through long acquaintance, whatever had been said rudely, that is, without showing proper deference, such as (addressing You as) "O Kṛṣṇa, O Yādaṇa, O friend": and whatever disrespect had been shown in fun to You, who are worthy of being honoured at all times—whatever disrespect had been shown to You, while playing, reclining, sitting or dining together, whether alone<sup>573</sup> or in the presence of (companions),—for all these, I crave pardon of You who are immeasurable

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।

न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यम्यधिक कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ ४३ ॥

43 You are the father of this world of moving and unmoving beings, You are its teacher and the most worthy of honour (therein) There is none equal to You Whence can there be another greater in the three worlds, O being of unsurpassed glory?

O being of unsurpassed glory! You are the father of this world of all moving and unmoving beings. You are also the teacher of this world. Therefore, You are the most worthy of honour in this world of moving and unmoving beings. There is none equal to You. Whence can there be another greater even in all the three worlds? No other is equal to You by virtue of even any (single) quality like compassion. Whence can there be one greater?

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय काय प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीडयम् ।

पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सह्यु प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥ ४४ ॥

44 Therefore, bowing down, prostrating the body, I beg pardon of You, the praiseworthy Lord. It is proper, O Lord, that You, who are dear to me, should bear with me who am dear (to You),<sup>574</sup> as a father with (his) son and as a friend with (his) friend.

573 'Eka' is understood by Śrī Madhva as an epithet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, meaning 'the only doer'. Jayatīrtha's gloss explains that 'e' stands for 'eka' in the sense of 'one' and 'ka' for 'doer'.

574 'Priyaḥ priyāyārhasi' is construed by Śrī Rāmānuja as *priyaḥ priyāya arhasi* and by Śrī Śaṅkara as *priyaḥ priyāyāḥ arhasi*. In the latter case, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is entreated to forgive Arjuna as a lover forgives his beloved. Both constructions are not free from grammatical difficulty.

Because You are the father of all, the most worthy of respect, the preceptor and greater than all (others) by virtue of qualities like compassion, therefore, bowing down and prostrating the body, I beg pardon of You, who are the praiseworthy Lord. As a father and a friend show grace respectively to a son even though he has committed an offence, and to a friend, when entreated with prostration, even so it is proper that You, who are supremely compassionate and dear to me, should bear with me, who am dear to You in respect of everything.

अदृष्टपूर्वं दृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथित मनो मे ।  
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवाम ॥ ८५ ॥

45 I am delighted, having seen what was unseen before, at the same time my mind is greatly troubled with fear. Show me, O Lord, only that (pleasing) form of Yours. Be kind, O Lord of the gods, O You in whom the universe resides !

Having seen Your form, unseen before, extremely wonderful and extremely fierce, I am delighted, that is, pleased. At the same time my mind is greatly troubled with fear. Hence show me only that very gracious form of Yours. Be pleased, O Lord of the gods, O You in whom the universe resides ! Show favour to me, O You who are the Lord even of the gods headed by Brahmā and who are the support of the entire universe ! 575

किरीटिन गदिन चक्रहस्तमिच्छामि त्वा द्रष्टुमह तथैव ।  
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ ४६ ॥

46 I wish to see You even thus, wearing a crown, holding a mace and with the discus in hand. O thousand-armed, O You having the universe as Your body ! become again of that very same four-handed form.

I wish to see You even thus, that is, as before, wearing a crown, holding a mace and with the discus in hand. Hence be possessed of that very same four-handed form which was shown before. O thousand-armed, O You having the universe for Your body ! The

575 The vocatives in the verse recall verse 13 above and Śvet Uṣ (VI. 7) (T. C.)

meaning is, "Do You, who are now seen with a form having a thousand arms and having the universe as body, become possessed of that same form (previously shown) "

**श्रीभगवानुवाच—**

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेद रूप पर दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।

तेजोमय विश्वमनन्तमाद्य यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ४७ ॥

THE LORD SAID

47 By Me pleased (with You), this supreme form of Mine, made of dazzling light, universal, infinite, primal, and not seen before by anyone other than you, has been shown to you through My associated qualities O Arjuna'

The form of Mine, which is made of dazzling light, that is, is a mass of dazzling light which is universal, that is, which forms the Self of the universe which is infinite, that is, has no end this is illustrative and means having no beginning, middle, and end which is primal, that is, which forms the origin of all beings other than Myself and which has not been seen before by anyone other than you this same (form) is now shown to you who are My devotee, by Me who am pleased, through My associated qualities, that is, through the quality of willing the truth which is associated with Me

He (Sri Krishna) then states "It is impossible that I can be seen as I am by all means other than exclusive devotion "

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।

एवरूपशक्य बहू नृलोके द्रष्टु त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ४८ ॥

48 Not by (study of) the Vedas, (by) the sacrifices, or (by) recitals of the sacred scriptures, not by gifts, not by rituals nor by fierce austerities can I be seen as of this form in the world of men by anyone other than yourself, O Arjuna (Kurupravīra)'

I, of this form, that is, as I am in reality, cannot be seen through such means merely as (study of) the Vedas, (performance of) sacrifices

etc.,<sup>576</sup> by any one who is without exclusive devotion and who is other than yourself who are full of devotion to Me

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।  
व्यपेतभी प्रीतमना पुनस्त्व तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥ ४९ ॥

49 For you, let there be no fear nor the state of stupefaction on seeing this form of Mine, terrible like this Rid of fear and pleased in mind, see again here that very same form of Mine

Whatever fear and whatever state of stupefaction have arisen in you, on account of seeing such a fierce form as this let both of these cease to be I shall show you that same benign form with which you have been familiar in the past See then here this form of Mine, which is that alone

सञ्जय उवाच—

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूय ।  
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेन भूत्वा पुनस्सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ५० ॥

SANJAYA SAID

50 Having spoken thus to Arjuna, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Vāsudeva) showed again His own form And He, the Great-souled One resuming again a benign form, comforted him who was terrified

The Lord as the son of Vāsudeva having spoken thus to the son of Pāṇḍu, again showed the four-handed form which was His own (in His present incarnation) And the Great-souled One, He who wills the truth, comforted him who was terrified at seeing an unfamiliar form by becoming again of the familiar benign form To this Lord of all, the Supreme Person the Supreme *Brahman*, who has assumed the mortal (human) form for helping the world (to salvation) and has become the son of Vāsudeva the four-handed form alone is His own (in His present incarnation) As a result of the entreaty of Vāsudeva who was frightened of Kamsa two hands

576 By 'Veda' is meant listening to the exposition of the meaning of the scriptures, while 'adhyayana' is reciting the sacred texts 'Kṛyāḥ' here mean rituals other than *vajras* as (T' C')

were withdrawn till the killing of Kamsa, and later revealed again. For this was prayed for "You are born, O Lord, O God of gods. Withdraw this form bearing the conch, the discus and the mace, out of kindness. Withdraw, O Self of all, this form with four hands" <sup>577</sup> (V. P. V. 3. 10 and 12). Even to Śiśupāla, who hated Him, only this form with four hands of the son of Vāsudeva was the object of incessant contemplation, as stated in . "(that form) with four long, well-grown arms and bearing the conch, the discus and the mace" (V. P. IV. 15. 13) <sup>578</sup>. Hence it is stated here by Arjuna (Pārtha) "of the same four-handed form" (XI. 46).

**अर्जुन उवाच—**

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सोम्य जनार्दन ।

इदानीमस्मि सर्वतस्सचेता प्रकृतिं गत ॥ ५१ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*51 Seeing this human and benign form of Yours, (O Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana), I have (as it were) got back my consciousness none and have come to my normal state*

Seeing this form of Yours, which is very benign, which is human in configuration, which is exclusively Yours and which is endowed with grace, tender softness, beauty and such other qualities, the excellence of each of which is unbounded, I have now (as it were) got back my consciousness, and I have come to my natural state.

**श्रीभगवानुवाच—**

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।

देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिण ॥ ५२ ॥

THE LORD SAID

*52 This form of Mine, which you have seen, is very difficult to get a sight of. Even the gods are ever eager to see this form*

<sup>577</sup> In V. 3. 10, the prayer is by Vāsudeva, in V. 3. 12 by Devakī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was born with four hands, dressed, bejewelled and armed. In response to the prayer of His parents, He became like a normal human child.

<sup>578</sup> Later in the verse, it is stated that at all times Śiśupāla could not think of anything other than this form of the Lord.

THIS form of Mine which you have seen, and which has been engaged in ruling everything, which has been the support of all and which constitutes the origin of all, it is very difficult to catch sight of; that is, it cannot be seen by anyone at all. Even the gods are ever eager to see this form but they have not seen it.<sup>579</sup> He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains why this is so

नाह वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन नचेज्यया ।

शक्य एवविधो द्रष्टु दृष्टवानसि मा यथा ॥ ५३ ॥

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवविधोऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञातु द्रष्टु च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टु च परन्तप ॥ ५४ ॥

53 Not through the Vedas, nor through the practice of austerities nor through the giving of gifts, nor through the performance of sacrifices is it possible for Me to be seen as you have seen Me

54 But through exclusive devotion, O Arjuna, it is possible really to know to see and to enter into Me, who am like this (O harasser of foes)

Through the Vedas which have become the objects of teaching exposition, study, hearing, and meditation with muttered prayers (*japa*) and through sacrifices, the giving of gifts making sacrificial offerings and religious austerities, carried out by themselves without devotion to Me,<sup>580</sup> it is not possible to see Me as I am in reality.<sup>581</sup> But through exclusive devotion,<sup>582</sup> it is possible to know Me accurately by means of the *sūtras*, to see Me directly according to the truth and to enter into Me fully. Accordingly, there is the *Śruti* text

579 Nor will they see it, adds Śrī Sāṅkara

580 Learning the Vedas, reflection on their purport and steady meditation on the Lord as taught therein cannot by themselves enable one to gain the Lord, if one is without loving devotion. Sacrifices, gifts and penance are helpful in taking one to the path of loving devotion and making him progress there

581 'Bramhida' is thus rendered by Śrī Rāmānuja. Śrī Sāṅkara glosses it as 'vibhāvāpaprakāra' as characterised by the universal form

582 Exclusive devotion that is, devotion having no other object in view, is here declared to be the means for knowing, seeing and entering into the Lord. T. C. points out that the devotion needed at each of the three stages is different. At first there is a devotion which arises from the effects of virtuous actions in earlier births and from conversation with the devout: this is helpful in bringing about knowledge as taught in the *sūtras*. Direct vision of the Lord is brought about by devotion marked by an intense desire to see the Lord. The highest devotion, arising after such a vision and full of ardour for a complete experience of the Lord, leads to entering into the Lord, the perfect experience of final release.

"This Self is not reached by reflection, nor by steady meditation nor by extensive hearing (of the scriptures) Whomsoever He (the Self) chooses, by him alone is He reached To him alone this Self reveals His own form" (*Kath Up* II 23 and *Mund Up* III 2 3)<sup>583</sup>

मन्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तस्सङ्गवर्जित ।

निर्वैरस्सर्वभूतेषु यस्स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ ५५ ॥

55 He who does work for Me, who holds Me to be supreme who is devoted to Me who is free from attachment and who is devoid of hatred in relation to all beings- he O Arjuna (Pāṇḍava) attains Me<sup>584</sup>

He who carries out all works like the study of the Vedas as forms of worshipping Me—he is one who does work for Me He who holds Me to be supreme is one to whom I alone am the supreme object of all undertakings He who by being extremely devoted to Me is unable to obtain sustenance for himself without reciting My names, praising Me, meditating on Me, worshipping Me, prostrating (himself) before Me and (doing) other similar actions and who does them constantly holding Me as the sole objective (he) is My devotee He who is free from attachment is one who on account of Myself only being dear to him, is unable to endure attachment to any other object He who is devoid of hatred in relation to all beings is one who on account of there being no cause for hatred in all beings is devoid of hatred in relation to them, because his nature is such as to have pleasure or pain solely by reason of union with or separation from Me, because he thinks of his own sufferings as caused by his transgressions and because he looks on all beings as subject to the Supreme Person

He who has become like this comes to Me that is, attains Me as I remain in reality The meaning is that free from the least trace of the fault of ignorance<sup>585</sup> and of all other faults without exception, he becomes one whose experience is exclusively about Me<sup>586</sup>

583 In S B (I, p 18) Śrī Rāmānuja thus comments on this text "For it is indeed the dearest one that becomes worthy to be chosen To whomsoever He is unsurpassingly dear, he alone is the dearest to Him"

584 T C points out that this stanza describes the state of devotion leading to 'entry' into the Lord, as stated in verse 54 According to Śrī Śaṅkara, this verse gives what forms the essence of the *Gitā* and leads to supreme bliss

585 By 'ignorance' is meant 'ignorance, mistaken knowledge and such things as the effects of *karina* which cause these' (T C)

586 This experience is that of the released self in *mokṣa*

## CHAPTER XII

To Arjuna, who wished to see directly the unobstructed sovereign glory of the Lord, Nārāyaṇa, who is the Supreme *Brahman* and who constitutes the final goal to those who practise the discipline of devotion, His own sovereign glory, as it is in reality, was shown by the Lord, who wills the truth, and who is an ocean of qualities like compassion, generosity, affability and others each of them being unbounded in excellence. It has also been taught that real knowledge, vision, and attainment of the Lord can be obtained only by one-pointed and uninterrupted devotion.

After this are explained how the worship of the Lord in the form of devotion on account of the speed with which its own objective is accomplished and from the extreme facility with which it can be followed is superior to meditation on the self which constitutes the means for the attainment of the self the means of worshipping the Lord the practice of meditation on the self for one who is not capable of this (worship of the Lord) and the requirements therefore (i.e., for meditation on the self) <sup>587</sup>

The superiority of the worship of the Lord on account of the superiority of the object of worship who constitutes the goal of realisation, has indeed been taught in "He who with his inner self directed to Me, has ardour and worships Me- he is deemed by Me the most accomplished as compared with the *yogins* and also with all others" (VI 47)

अर्जुन उवाच—

एव सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वा पर्युपासते ।

ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्त तेषां के योगवित्तमा ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*1 Those devotees who (desirous of being) ever united (with You), worship You in this manner, and those who meditate on the indestructible and unmanifested (self) — of these, who are the best knowers of the way to realisation ?*

<sup>587</sup> Vide G. S. (16). The criterion for the superiority of *bhakti-yoga*, as taught in VI 47, is different.



Those devotees who, in this manner, that is, in the manner taught in such passages as "He who does work for Me" (XI 55) and (desirous of being) ever united with (You), that is, holding none other than You, the Lord, as the supreme object of attainment, worship You fully—(You) who are an ocean of endless qualities like grace, affability, omniscience, the ability to will the truth and others, and who are endowed with all sovereign power and those who meditate on the indestructible,<sup>588</sup> that is the essential nature of the individual self and what is the same, the unmanifested, that is that thing whose nature does not become clearly manifest to the eyes and such other organs of external perception —of these two, who are the best knowers of the way to realisation? The meaning is, "Who reach sooner their own goal?" For He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) makes clear later in the statement, "I become before long, O Pārtha" (XII 7), that knowing best the way to realisation is with reference to the speed (of attainment)<sup>589</sup>

श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मा नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

श्रद्धया पर्योपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मता ॥ २ ॥

THE LORD SAID

2 Those who (desirous of being) ever united (with Me) and endowed with supreme faith worship Me, fixing their minds on Me (as the goal of attainment)—these are considered by Me the best among all striving for realisation

They are considered by Me to be the best among all striving for realisation who, fixing their minds on Me, on account of My being exceedingly dear to them being endowed with supreme faith and being ever united (with Me) that is being desirous of eternal union

588 According to Śrī Saṅkara, the two classes of devotees dealt with here are those who meditate on *v i v r p a* and those who seek to realise the *Nirguṇa Brahman* the Absolute without attributes. Śrī Madhva understands by the *ākāra* and the *avyakta* Śrī the divine consort of the Lord and the deity presiding over matter

589 In VI 47 the superiority of the worship of the Lord is demonstrated on the ground of the superiority of the object of worship. Here the difference between the quest for God realisation and the quest for self realisation as regards rapidity of attainment is raised

with Me worship Me The meaning is that those who worship Me fixing on Me a mind having for the subject of its thoughts the supreme goal to be attained - they attain Me easily and before long

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्त पर्युपासते ।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्य च कूटस्थमचल ध्रुवम् ॥ ३ ॥

सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्राम सर्वत्र समबुद्धय ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रता ॥ ४ ॥

क्लेशाऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःख देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ ५ ॥

3 But those who meditate on the indestructible (self) which is incapable of verbal definition, unmanifested present everywhere unthinkable common (to all things), immortal and firmly enduring

4 Having subdued well all their senses and looking alike on all, they, intent on the welfare of all beings, attain Me alone

5 The difficulty is greater for those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested For the path relating to the unmanifested is reached with difficulty by those who are embodied

Those who, having subdued well all the senses that is, having restrained well the eyes and all other organs of sense from their functions, looking alike on all things, that is, on account of the selves being solely of the nature of knowledge looking alike on all selves present everywhere in the bodies of gods and other beings who are different from one another in form and in consequence thereof intent on the welfare of all beings that is free from seeking pleasure in harm befalling all beings, the pleasure in such harm to all beings being indeed due to the selves being mistaken for the varied forms of gods and other beings they who in this manner meditate on the indestructible, that is, on the nature of the individual self which is incapable of verbal definition in the sense that by reason of its being (in its essential nature) other than the body it cannot be defined by such words as 'god', etc.,<sup>590</sup> which because of this indeed is not

590 Such words may denote the self mediately through the body, but the self, free of contact with the *prakṛti* and revealed in its essential nature, cannot be so denoted as distinct from matter (T U)

clearly manifest to the eyes and other such organs, which is present everywhere and unthinkable, that is, though existing everywhere, namely, in the bodies of gods and others incapable of being conceived by everyone of those forms, on account of its belonging to a different category of things altogether, which is therefore common, common to all things, the meaning being that it is not connected with any of the forms peculiar to gods and others,<sup>591</sup> which is immovable in the sense that on account of its being not subject to modifications it does not deviate from its own particular form, and which is hence firmly enduring, that is, is eternal

They who meditate on the indestructible self in this manner, they too attain Me alone. The meaning is that even they<sup>592</sup> assuredly realise the self as free from subject to birth and death and similar in form to Me. Hereafter He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will refer to "those who have attained the same qualities that characterise Me" (XIV 2). The *Śruti* also teaches " (The wise man) being untaunted attains the highest degree of equality (with the *Brahman*) " (*Mund Up* III 1 3)

Accordingly, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will speak of the Supreme *Brahman* being different from the freed soul, which is incapable of mutation and is denoted by the word, 'indestructible' (or *akṣara*), in "That which is like something uniform and homogeneous - (namely the emancipated self) is called the indestructible. The Highest Person is other (than the 'destructible' and 'indestructible' soul)." (XV 16 7). But, in the teaching concerning the *akṣara* given in "And that is the higher (science) by which that *Akṣara* is known" (*Mund Up* I 1 5) what is indicated by the word, '*Akṣara*', is the Supreme *Brahman* Himself, because of His being the source of all created beings and possessing such other characteristics.<sup>593</sup>

591 The self is 'common' in the sense that it is capable of entering into all kinds of bodies one after another. Śrī Śaṅkara takes *kūṭastha*, to mean 'seated in *maya*' or 'remaining unchanging like a heap'. Śrī Mādhva renders the word as 'presiding over space'.

592 Even though they seek something other than Myself (i.e., the state of *kaivalya*)

593 Vide note 547, and S. B. (I 2 22-24), where *Mund Up* (I 1) is discussed. The *Akṣara* mentioned in I 1 5 is described as the source of the universe in I 1 7-8 "Just as the spider sends out and withdraws its thread just as herbs spring out of the earth, just as the hair on the head and the body grow from a living person, even so this universe springs out of the *Akṣara*. The *Brahman* grows by *tapas*. Material elements (*anna*) are born out of Him from material elements are born life, mind, embodied souls, various worlds and the immortality arising from ritualistic works"

The trouble is the greater for those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested. The path leading to the unmanifested is the functioning of the mind with the unmanifested as its object. It is attained with difficulty by embodied beings, who have the erroneous view that the body is the self. For embodied beings look upon the body alone as the self.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches very clearly how the worshippers of the Lord are the best knowers of the way to realisation.

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्त्यस्य मत्परा ।

अनन्येनैव योगेन मा ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ ६ ॥

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युससारसागरात् ।

भवामि न चिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ ७ ॥

6 But those who, making over all actions to Me and holding Me as the supreme (goal), worship Me meditating on Me with exclusive devotion

7 Of those whose minds are fixed on Me I become before long the redeemer from the fatal sea of recurring births and deaths

But those who, with a mind fixed on the Supreme Self and holding Me to be supreme, that is, having Me for their sole object of attainment, make over to Me all their works, consisting of secular actions, such as eating which are intended for supporting the body and contribute to the maintenance of bodily life, and Vedic rites like sacrifices, gifts, fire-offerings, austerities, etc., along with their essential foundations and their purposes,<sup>594</sup> and worship Me, meditating on Me with exclusive devotion that is, with devotion having no other object to serve, the meaning being that they worship Me, carrying on meditation, worship, prostration, praising (Me), uttering (My) names and similar acts of devotion which are by themselves extremely dear to them and are equal to the object of attainment of these (devotees)—to them, I become before long the redeemer from the sea called *samsāra* which, by reason of its being opposed to the attainment of Myself, is fatal.

—  
594 'Sa kārṣaṇaḥ' is explained by T. U. as 'sandhyāraṇaḥ' 'along with the twilight prayers'. These foundational rituals qualify one for the performance of other rituals.

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धि निवेशय ।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ ८ ॥

8 Fix your attention on Me alone direct your will to Me Thereafter, you will live in Me alone (About this) there is no doubt

Fix your attention on Me alone, because of My being the unsurpassed goal of human endeavour, being easy to attain and being attainable without delay, that is, fix your attention in profound contemplation on Me alone Direct your will to Me that is, make up your mind that I alone am the supreme object of attainment Thereafter,<sup>595</sup> you will live in Me alone<sup>596</sup> The meaning is that you will live in Me only, after fixing your attention on Me, preceded by a conviction that I alone am the supreme object of attainment

अथ चित्त समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ॥ ९ ॥

9 If now you are unable to fix your mind on Me in profound contemplation, then seek (let wish) to attain Me, O Arjuna (Dhananjaya), by the practice of repetition

If now, at once you are unable to fix steadily your mind on Me in profound contemplation, then seek to attain Me by the practice of repetition<sup>597</sup> That is, seek to attain Me, after getting, through the repeated practice of remembrance, full of exceeding love, concentration of mind steadily on Me, who am the ocean of innumerable qualities arising from My own nature, like beauty, affability, friendliness, parental affection, compassion, sweetness, majesty, magnanimity, heroism, valour, overwhelming might, omniscience, the ability to satisfy all desires the capacity to will the truth, sovereignty over all, the quality of being the cause of all,<sup>598</sup> etc., each of which is of unbounded excellence, and who am opposed to all that is evil

<sup>595</sup> Sri Śaṅkara takes *ata urdham* 'to mean after death'

<sup>596</sup> T C explains this as meaning either that the aspirant will feel almost like a realised self or that he will be free from fear of failure in his efforts, etc

<sup>597</sup> 'Abhyāsa yoga' is the yoga which consists of repeatedly seeking to keep the mind fixed on the Lord (T C)

<sup>598</sup> The reference to the Lord being the cause of all evokes wonder as well as filial affection (T C)

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिं ववाप्स्यसि ॥ १० ॥

10 If you are unequal even to repetition, then become intent on doing works for Me. Even doing works for My sake, you will attain success.

If then you are unequal even to repetition of remembrance in the above manner, become intent on doing works for Me. My works are such activities as building temples, making gardens (therefor), placing lights (therein), sweeping, sprinkling water over and plastering (the floor), gathering flowers (for decorating My images), undertaking My worship, uttering My names, circumambulating (My temples), praising (Me), prostrating (before Me), etc. Perform these, as they are extremely dear. Even doing works for Me, finding them to be extremely dear, you will, without delay, get your mind steadily fixed in Me, after practising repetition, and will attain success in the form of attaining Me.

अथेतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रित ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥ ११ ॥

11 If you are unable to do even this, depending on the discipline (of devotion) leading to Me, then, with a controlled self, give up the fruits of all actions.

If you are unable to do even this, depending on the discipline leading to Me, if you are, that is, unable to do even works for My sake which constitute the sprout of the discipline of devotion after taking up the discipline of devotion in which I am made the sole object of love by meditation on My qualities—then, taking up the discipline for the attainment of the indestructible self which is taught in the group of the first six chapters (of the *Gītā*), which consists of meditation on the essential nature of the self and which gives rise to devotion to the Lord and as the means therefor, give up the fruits of all works.<sup>599</sup>

599 Performing the Lord's works is the 'sprout' of *bhakti-yoga*. That being found impossible, the aspirant is advised to take up *karma-yoga* which is the 'sprout' of the *yoga* of self-realisation (T. C.). This latter *yoga* can lead to the disciplines of both the *bhakti* and the *bhakti-yoga*.

For the state of mind which holds Me, on account of My being exceedingly dear, as the only object of attainment arises only in one all of whose sins have been destroyed without exception. One with a controlled self is one whose mind is well subdued. When the individual self is directly seen as of the nature of being solely dependent on Me, after all that veil it, like ignorance (or the delusion of mistaking the body for the self) have been removed by meditation on the self, brought to success with the help of works performed without attachment to fruits and as worship of Myself then supreme devotion to Me will arise by itself.

Accordingly, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will teach in the passage commencing from "Man attains perfection by worshipping Him by his own duty" and ending with "Having given up (egotism, etc.) and being free from the sense of possession and tranquil one becomes fitted for the state of the *brahman* (or the self in its pure state). Having realised the state of the *brahman*, and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. The same to all beings he attains supreme devotion for Me" (XVIII 46-54).

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्विधानं विशिष्यते ।

ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ १२ ॥

12 For knowledge (of the self) is better than the repeated practice (of remembrance of the Lord). Meditation is esteemed higher than (this) knowledge and giving up the fruits of all works than meditation. From (that) giving up (of the fruits of works) peace soon (results).

Knowledge of the self in direct realisation, resulting from meditation on the essential nature of the indestructible (self), indeed, excels, in bringing about the welfare of the self, the practice of remembrance (of the Lord) which is difficult on account of its lack of exceeding love (for Him). Meditation on the self, indeed, in bringing about the welfare of the self, excels such knowledge of the self in direct realisation as is imperfect. Works, indeed, forming the means therefor and performed with renunciation of the fruits <sup>600</sup> excel such meditation when it is imperfect.

600 Śrī Sāṅkara says that here we have a compliment paid to the renunciation of the fruits of all actions with a view to stimulate people to adopt it. Through this compliment, *karma yoga* is really recommended. Śrī Madhva also takes the view that the praise of *sarva-karma-phala tyāga* is merely complimentary. What is really sought to be conveyed is that meditation, united with renunciation, is better than mere meditation.

The peace of mind from the destruction of sins will come only after the performance of works without desire for fruits. When the mind is tranquil, meditation on the self is accomplished. From meditation arises knowledge of that (self) in direct realisation. From that knowledge in direct realisation arises supreme devotion. In this manner only the discipline intended for the realisation of the self is good for one who is incapable of the practice of loving devotion (to the Lord). And to one who is practising the discipline for the attainment of the self and whose mind is not tranquil, devotion to works, without desire for fruits and including in it knowledge of the self, is good for attaining (success in) the discipline (for the realisation of the self) <sup>601</sup>. Such is the meaning.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes the qualities to be acquired by one devoted to the discipline of performing works, without attachment to the fruits <sup>602</sup>.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूताना मैत्र करुण एव च ।

निर्ममो निरहङ्कारस्समदुःखसुख क्षमो ॥ १३ ॥

सन्तुष्टस्सतत योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चय ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तस्स से प्रिय ॥ १४ ॥

13 He who has no hatred in relation to all beings, who is friendly and merciful (towards them) who is free from the sense of possession and egotism, to whom pain and pleasure are alike who is patient

14 Who is contented, who is always given over to meditation, who has a controlled self, who has firm convictions, whose attention and intelligence are dedicated to Me - that devotee of Mine who is like this, is dear to Me

601 The several steps enumerated are in order - the performance of works without desire for fruits, tranquillity, meditation on the self, self realisation and devotion to the Lord

602 According to Śrī Śaṅkara, in the verse 13-20 we have a description of the multitude of duties which lead the meditators on the *Nirguṇa-Brahman* directly to immortality. T. C. makes it clear that the repeated reference to 'that devotee of Mine who is like this' in verses 13-19 must be deemed to refer to the element of devotion in *karma-yoga*. Śrī Madhva thinks that verses 13-20 describe the follower of *bhakti-yoga*.



That devotee of Mine<sup>603</sup> who is like this, who worships Me in this way through *karma-yoga*, he is dear to Me. He has no hatred in relation to all beings, that is, is free from hatred even in relation to those who hate him and those who hurt him. He thinks, "These beings hate me and hurt me, prompted by the Lord in accordance with my own transgressions." He is friendly, showing a friendly disposition to all beings, even to those who hate him and hurt him. He is merciful, showing mercy to them when they are suffering. He is free from the sense of possession—that is, he is free from the sense of possession with reference to his body, his senses and all things connected with them. He is free from egotism, devoid of the wrong notion that the body is the self<sup>604</sup>. Hence pain and pleasure are alike to him—he is free from the exaltation and depression arising from the pain and pleasure which come from his volitional activities<sup>605</sup>. He is patient, not being affected even by these two (i.e., pleasure and pain) produced by the contacts (of sense-objects), which are unavoidable.

He is content—that is, content with whatever thing needed for the maintenance of the body is received by him by chance<sup>606</sup>. He is always given over to meditation, always intent on reflecting about the self as distinct from and freed of contact with the *prakṛti*<sup>607</sup>. He has a controlled self, the working of his mind is regulated<sup>608</sup>. He has firm convictions—that is, he has firm convictions about the teachings given in the science dealing with the self. His attention

603 The *bhakti* included in *karma yoga* is what is mentioned here and in succeeding verses (T C)

604. Śrī Śaṅkara renders ' *nirahankara* ' as "free from the notion of 'I' ". This is in accordance with his philosophical position that the individuality of the individual self is due to the limitation imposed by the principle of *ahankāra* on the one and only principle of undifferentiated consciousness. Śrī Rāmānuja's view is that the notion of individuality in the individual self persists even in the state of final release, and that *ahankāra* merely leads to the confounding of the body with the self. Both the positions are set out in S B (1 i i)

605 The pain and pleasure mentioned here arise from egotism and the sense of possession (T C)

606 The phrases used here recall IV 12 and look forward to XIII 19

607 The meditation here mentioned is not formal *yoga*, but the reflections leading to it (T C)

608. Freedom from thinking over things which are not the self is implied here (T C)

and intelligence are dedicated to Me <sup>609</sup> that is, his attention and intelligence are dedicated to Me in the faith, "The Lord, Vāsudeva Himself, is worshipped through works carried out without desire for fruits And (so) worshipped, He will bring about for me direct vision (of the self) "

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च य ।

हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यस्स च मे प्रिय ॥ १५ ॥

15 He from whom the world is not afflicted and who does not afflict the people, who is free from joy and jealousy, fear and disgust—he, too, is dear to Me

That person who is devoted to the discipline of works and through whom as a cause the world is not afflicted – the meaning being that he does not do any work at all causing affliction to the world who does not get afflicted by the world as a cause, that is, in relation to whom the whole world does not do any work causing affliction through the conviction of his being free from enmity towards the world <sup>610</sup> and who therefore is free from joy towards someone, jealousy towards someone, fear towards someone and disgust towards someone— even he who is like this is dear to Me <sup>611</sup>

अनपेक्षश्शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथ ।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तस्स मे प्रिय ॥ १६ ॥

16 That devotee of Mine who has no desires, who is pure, skilled, indifferent and free from distress and who gives up all undertakings—he is dear to Me

He who has no desires, that is, who has no desires with reference to everything other than the self who is pure, that is, whose body has been nourished by things enjoined (as fit for the purpose) in the *sāstras* who is skilled, that is, who is competent in doing actions enjoined by the *sāstras* who is indifferent everywhere (i.e., about other things) who is free from distress at the sufferings from heat, cold, contact with rough things and such other experiences which

<sup>609</sup> The faculty of attention is dedicated to the Lord when attention is directed to Him as the object of worship that of intelligence, when there is the conviction that He is the giver of all fruits (T C)

<sup>610</sup> What is enjoined on the *karma yogin* is that he must behave in such a way the whole world is convinced that he means no harm to it (T C)

<sup>611</sup> One who fits the description given in verse 15 is dear to the Lord, even though he lacks the qualifications set out in verses 13 and 14 (T C)

cannot be avoided in the course of carrying out works enjoined by the *sāstras* who gives up all undertakings, that is, who gives up all undertakings which consist of actions other than those enjoined in the *sāstras*—he who is such a devotee of Mine, he is dear to me

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् यस्स मे प्रिय ॥ १७ ॥

17 He who full of devotion (for Me), feels neither joy nor aversion, neither grieves nor desires, and who gives up both what is meritorious and what is sinful— he is dear to Me

He who does not feel joy, that is, that *karma-yogin*, who getting all those things which are the cause of joy in men does not feel joy who feels no aversion that is, does not hate, after getting anything which is not liked who, after experiencing that which is the cause of grief in men like the loss of wife, son, wealth etc., does not grieve who does not desire for anything of that kind, not already obtained by him (the loss of which will cause grief) and who gives up both what is meritorious and what is sinful, that is who because even with reference to *punya* there is no difference in being the cause of bondage like sin gives up both (*punya* and sin) <sup>612</sup> he who is like this and full of devotion (for Me), he is dear to Me

समश्शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानावमानयो ।

शीतोष्णमुखदुःखेषु समस्सङ्गविर्वर्जित ॥ १८ ॥

नून्यनिन्दास्तुतिमौनी सतुष्टो येनकेनचित् ।

अनिकेतस्स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नर ॥ १९ ॥

18 He who is alike to foe and friend, as also in honour and dishonour, who is alike in cold and heat and pleasure and pain who is free from all attachments

19 To whom censure and praise are equal who is silent (when praised or blamed) content with anything whatever, who has no home, and who is of a steady mind and devoted to Me he is dear to Me <sup>613</sup>

612 T C quotes Ch Up (VIII 4 1) "To one who attains the Bridge (or the Brahman) there is no old age, no death, no grief, no meritorious deed, no sinful deed all sins turn away from him. Even meritorious or virtuous deeds are called 'sin' here because they produce, when performed with a view to ensure happiness here or to win *Śāraṅga* effects which hinder salvation

613 T C states that, according to Yādavaprakāśa, verses 18 and 19 refer to the ascetic

By the passage beginning with, "He who has no hatred in relation to all beings" (XII 13), has been taught freedom from hatred and other such feelings towards foes, friends etc. Here it is taught that the possession of evenness of mind, even when they (i.e., such persons) are near, is far superior to that (i.e., the qualities taught above). One who has no home is one who is free from attachment to home and such other things because of his being of a steady mind in relation to the self. On account of this, he is alike even in honour and dishonour. He who is like this and is full of devotion (for Me), he is dear to Me.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) sums up in accordance with the beginning (of this chapter), demonstrating the superiority of one devoted to the discipline of devotion to this devotee of the self.<sup>614</sup>

ये तु घर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।

श्रद्धावान् मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽजीव मे प्रिया ॥ २० ॥

20 But those devotees who adopt this nectar of virtuous conduct as taught above, who are full of faith and who hold Me as the highest they are exceedingly dear to Me.

But those who adopt the discipline of devotion,<sup>615</sup> which is the nectar in accord with virtuous conduct, that is which is in accord with virtuous conduct and is nectar, and which, though the means, is equal to the object of attainment (in being desirable)—(adopt it) as taught above, that is, in the manner stated in the passage beginning with, "Those who fixing their minds on Me (XII 2).— these devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

614 At the beginning of this Chapter one who meditates on the self with a view to attain *kaivalya* has been taught to be inferior to the follower of *bhakti yoga*. Then the attributes of one meditating on the self as a part of *karma-yoga* have been described. Now the Chapter concludes with praise of the follower of *bhakti yoga*.

615. Śrī Rāmānuja takes the person referred to in verse 20 as the follower of *karma yoga* described in verses 13-19. This view allows full force being given to the disjunctive particle, 'tu', in the verse. It stresses also the distinction between the devotees of this verse who are exceedingly dear to the Lord, and the devotee of verses 13-19 who is merely dear. Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva regard verses 13-20 as dealing with a single subject.

## CHAPTER XIII

In the first group of six chapters has been taught the realisation of the real nature of the individual self by the seeker as forming an essential ingredient in the worship of Vāsudeva, the Lord who is the Supreme *Brahman* and is the supreme object of attainment, and as capable of being accomplished by the two disciplines known as *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga* <sup>616</sup> And in the middle (group of six chapters) the discipline of the *yoga* of one-pointed and uninterrupted devotion, attained as a result of the knowledge of the true nature of the Lord, who constitutes the highest goal, and of His glory, has been taught. It has also been pointed out secondarily that for those who long for pre-eminent sovereign power and for those who long merely for the state of self-sufficient isolation (*kāivalya*) of the self, the discipline of devotion (*bhakti-yoga*) is the means of attaining their several objectives.

Now, in the next group of six chapters the real nature of the *prakṛti*, of the self, of the universe which consists of these in combination, and of the Lord, the essential character of (the disciplines of) *karma*, *jñāna*, and *bhakti* and the methods of adopting them— all of which have been taught in the (first) two groups of six chapters—are thoroughly examined <sup>617</sup> In regard to this (third group of six chapters), in the thirteenth (chapter), the attributes of the body and self, a thorough examination of the real nature of the body, the means for attaining the self freed of the body, the investigation of the real nature of the self in a state of separation, the cause for the association of such a self with inanimate matter, and the method of reflecting over the distinction (between the body and the self) are all dealt with <sup>618</sup>

**श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—**

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।

एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विद ॥ १ ॥

<sup>616</sup> Vide *G. S. 2*

<sup>617</sup> The thorough examination or *śūdhana* consists in clearing all doubts about earlier teachings, by making clear what has been implied, enunciating what has not been stated and supplying what is needful for completion of the sense (*T. C.*)

<sup>618</sup> Śrī Rāmānuja's introductory remarks are based on *G. S. 2-4, 27* and *17*

## THE LORD SAID

*1 This body, O Arjuna (Kaunteya) ' is called the ksetra (i.e., the field) Those who know this (self) speak of him who knows it as the ksetrajña (the knower of the field)*

This body, which is cognised along with the experiencing self by means of grammatical equations like 'I am a god', 'I am a man', 'I am fat', and 'I am lean', is described by those who know the true nature of the body as the field for the experience<sup>619</sup> of the experiencing self who is a different thing (from the body). Those who know this, that is, those who know the true nature of the self, designate as the *ksetrajña* (or the knower of the field) him who knows it (i.e., body), both organ by organ and as an aggregate, in such a way as to enable him to claim, "I know this", and who, because of his being the knower, is an entity different from this (body) which is the object to be known.

It is true that at the time of apprehending objects like the pot which are different from the body, the cogniser apprehends the knowing self through a grammatical equation with the body to the effect, "I who am a god, or I who am a man know such things as the pot". But, because at the time of experiencing the body he experiences even the body as an object of knowledge, like the pot and other things, thus, "I know this (body)"—the body also, on account of its being the object of knowledge, is a different thing from the knowing self. Hence, the *ksetrajña* who is the knower is other than the body which is an object of knowledge, like such objects as the pot.

But the cognition by a grammatical equation is explained by the body being really incapable of existing separate from him (the knower of the body), for the reason that the body has the primary character of being an attribute of the self like 'ox-ness' and other (generic) attributes. Therein, because the distinctive form of the knower (or the individual self)<sup>620</sup> is not within the scope of the eyes

619 Śrī Śaṅkara says that the body is called the *ksetra*, because (i) it is protected from injury, (ii) it is destructible, (iii) it is liable to decay and (iv) the fruits of *karma* are reaped in it as in a field. The *Dravida*s derive the meaning of 'ksetra' from the Lord dwelling in it.

620 This uncommonness of form consists of the soul having such attributes as being eternal, subtle and of the nature of knowledge (T. U.)

and such other organs of sense and because he can be the object of perception (only) to the mind refined by *yoga*,<sup>621</sup> fools see the knower only as of the form of the *prakṛti* on account of the mere presence of the *prakṛti* (in union with him). Hence He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will teach later on in the *Gītā* 'The deluded do not see that (self) which is associated with the *gunas*, whether it is going out or staying or experiencing. But those who have the eye of wisdom, see' (XV 10)

क्षेत्रज्ञ चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ २ ॥

2 And know, O Arjuna (Bhārata)' the *kṣetrajña* within all bodies also to be Myself. That knowledge which is of the body and the knower of the body is, in My view, (the highest) knowledge.

Know as Myself the *kṣetrajña* also who is of the sole form of the knower in all bodies like those of gods and men. That is, know him as having Me for his Self. By the word 'also' (*api*) in "And the *kṣetrajña* also," it is made out by implication that it has been taught, "know the *kṣetra* (or the body) also to be Myself"<sup>622</sup>. Just as the body, by reason of its having primarily the character of an attribute of the *kṣetrajña*, cannot exist independently of it, and hence can be denoted only through a grammatical equation with it, know that likewise both the *kṣetra* and the *kṣetrajña*, by reason of their having primarily the character of My attributes, cannot exist independently of Me and therefore can be denoted only by means of a grammatical equation with Me.

The *Śruti* texts declare that the *kṣetra*, which is an aggregate of the earth and other elements, and also the *kṣetrajña* have the

621 This is in reply to a possible objection, which may be set out thus. When a white ox is cognised, there is cognition of something qualified by whiteness and oxness. But when one cognises oneself as a man, the cognition is not of the form that he is something qualified by the attribute of the human body. On the other hand, the cognition, 'I am a man', has reference only to a mass of matter qualified by the attribute of human-ness. The human body, so cognised, is not perceived to be the attribute of anything else (T. C.).

622 Śrī Śaṅkara writes "He who is the *kṣetrajña* in all the *kṣetras* and who is differentiated by the many limiting conditions in the form of *kṣetras* from Brahman down to a clump of grass—know Him to be (really) free of the differentiation caused by all the limiting conditions and beyond the range of the ideas conveyed by such words as 'existent' and 'non-existent'. Such is the purport."

Lord for their Self, on account of their being fundamentally of the essential nature of the Lord's body in such passages as that beginning from, "He who dwelling in the earth is within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body the earth is and who rules the earth from within, He is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Bṛh. Up.* III. 7. 3), and ending with, "He who dwelling in the individual self is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body the self is, and who rules the self from within, He is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Mādh. Bṛh. Up.* III. 7. 22). It is this abidance of the Lord as the Self of all knowers of bodies by reason of His being their internal controller, which is the cause of His being denoted by grammatical equations with them.

While teaching earlier and later to the effect, "I am the Self, O Guḍākeśa! seated in the hearts of all beings" (X. 20), "There is nothing, movable or immovable that can exist without Me" (X. 39), and "I stand regulating and controlling all this universe with but a fraction (of My power)" (X. 42.)—in the middle He denotes (Himself) by grammatical equations in "I am Viṣṇu among the Ādityas" (X. 21), and similar statements.<sup>623</sup>

That knowledge relating to discrimination between the body and the knower of the body and relating to both of them having Me as their Self, which has been taught—in My view, that alone is knowledge worthy of being acquired.

Some say:<sup>624</sup> "By the grammatical equation, 'Know also the knower of the body to be Myself,' oneness (between the individual self and the Supreme Self) is to be understood. Hence it is to be granted (even by you) that only for the Lord who is Existence, through ignorance, the state of the *kṣetrajña* (i.e., the individual soul) arises as it were (and not in real truth). This teaching of oneness is for removing that (ignorance). By this teaching of the Lord, who is most worthy of confidence, the delusion of being the *kṣetrajña* comes to an end, just as by means of the teaching of one who is worthy of confidence, which is to the effect, 'This is a rope, and not a serpent,' there is cessation of the delusion of (cognising a rope as) a serpent."

623. Thus these grammatical equations are shown to be based on the fact that the Lord abides as the Self in all. See Notes 507 and 509.

624. The *Ādityas* and the followers of the schools of Bhāskara and Yādvaprakāśa are meant.



They are to be questioned thus: "Is this Teacher, the Lord, Vāsudeva, the Supreme Ruler, one whose ignorance has come to an end on account of the direct perception of the real nature of the Self? Or is He not so?"

If He is one whose ignorance has come to an end, then the perception of differences among Arjuna (Kaunteya) and others and activities like teaching them, etc., do not become possible on account of the impossibility of superimposing on the Self, which is nothing but pure, unqualified consciousness, the form of anything other than itself. In case He is one whose ignorance has not come to an end, because of His not having had a direct perception of the Self, then merely because of His being ignorant, there can be no teaching (by Him) in regard to the knowledge of the Self. For it has been declared (earlier in the *Gītā*) "The wise who see the truth (i.e., have had direct vision of the self) will teach you knowledge" (IV 34). Therefore, arguments of this kind are to be disregarded as having been set up to the delusion of the world by ignorant men, who have not taken into consideration the opposition (to their teachings) from the *Vedas*, the *Smytis*, the *Itihāsas*, the *Purāṇas*, logic, and their own words.<sup>625</sup>

<sup>626</sup>The truth here is this. Some scriptural passages, such as the following among others, speak of the distinction in nature between

625 This sentence is apparently a reply to Śrī Śaṅkara's severe strictures, in his commentary on XIII. 2, against all those who do not accept the doctrines of *Advaita*. T C here seeks to sustain the claim made here that other schools of *Vedānta* contradict scripture and logic and that there are also self-contradictions involved in them.

626 From here the rest of the commentary on this verse is practically identical with a passage in the section dealing with *Nivartakānupapatti* in the *Mahānīlakaṇṭha* of the *Jyōtīśādhikaraṇa* of the *Śrībhāṣya*. See S. B. I., pp. 199-209. T C here explains how this section of the commentary effectively answers the following important criticisms against *Vishīṣṭadvaita*: (i) The absolute distinction between the *Brahman* and the world contradicts (a) the scriptural teaching that the causal *Brahman* attains name and form in His state as effect, (b) the declaration that by knowing Him all things become known, (c) the grammatical equations between the world and the *Brahman*, (d) *Brahman* being the material cause of the world, and (e) the effect always being a modification of the cause. (ii) There are difficulties in looking upon the creation of the world as having been carried out by the Lord, the selves and the *prakṛti* either separately or together. (iii) The immutability of the *Brahman* and His possession at all times of auspicious attributes go against some texts. (iv) A logical principle is contradicted when it is not conceded that the attributes of the *Brahman* are declared only to be negated later. (v) There is self-contradictoriness in the view that the *Brahman* is at the same time distinct from all things and is their Self.

the non-intelligent thing (or matter), the intelligent thing (or the individual self) and the Supreme *Brahman* as consisting in their possessing (respectively) the character of being the object of enjoyment, the character of being the enjoyer and the character of being the Supreme Ruler:—"Out of this *prakṛti* (or material Nature), he who is the Possessor of *māyā* (i.e., the Lord) creates this world, wherein another (i.e., the individual self) is bound down by *māyā*" (*Śvet. Up* IV. 9), "Understand then *māyā* to be the *prakṛti* and the Possessor of *māyā* to be the Great Lord" (*Ibid* IV. 10), "The destructible is the *prakṛti*; the immortal and the indestructible is the *hara* (i.e., the individual self); and the Lord alone rules over the destructible entity (or the *prakṛti*) and the individual self" (*Ibid* I. 10)—Here by the expression, "The immortal and the indestructible is the *hara*," the enjoyer (or the individual self) is pointed out, he is (called) '*hara*' because the individual self utilises the *prakṛti* as an object of his own enjoyment <sup>627</sup>

(Again,) "He is the cause, He is the Lord of (the individual self who is) the lord of the senses, He has no progenitor and no superior" (*Ibid*. VI. 9); "He is the Lord of the *prakṛti* and the individual self, and is the regulator of the qualities<sup>628</sup> (of the *prakṛti*)" (*Ibid* VI. 16), "Him who is the Lord of the universe, the ruler over the individual selves, the eternal, the auspicious and the inexhaustible" (*M Nār* XI. 3); "The two unborn, the Knower (or the Lord) and the ignorant (or the individual self), are the sovereign and the subject" (*Śvet Up* I. 9), "The Eternal among those who are eternal, the Intelligent One among those who are intelligent, the One who grants the desires of the many" (*Ibid* VI. 13 and *Kath Up* V. 13), "Knowing the enjoyer (or the individual self), the object of enjoyment (or the *prakṛti*) and the Impeller (or the Lord)" (*Śvet Up* I. 12), "Regarding the individual self and the Impeller to be different, and being therefore blessed by Him, he attains immortality" (*Ibid* I. 6), "One of the two eats the sweet *pippala* fruit, while the other shines in splendour without eating at all" (*Ibid* IV. 6 and *Mund Up* III. 1.1);<sup>629</sup>

627 The conventional meaning of '*hara*' is '*Śiva*'. Here the etymological meaning is required to suit the context

628. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are meant

629. The self and the Lord in a single body are figured as two birds on a single tree. Of these, the self eats the *pippala*, which is the fruit of his *karma*. The Lord remains free and resplendent

(Again,) "There is one unborn female being (*ajā*) who is red, white and black and who produces numerous offspring of the same kind as herself, there is another unborn being, male (*aja*), who loves her and is close to her, there is yet another male unborn being (*aja*), who, after having enjoyed her, gives her up" (*Ibid* IV. 5),<sup>630</sup> "The cow (*i e*, the *prakṛti*) has no beginning and end, is the mother and source of all beings (*i e*, is the author of general creation and of secondary creation)" (*Chū Up* 5), and "On the same tree, the individual self sits immersed in grief, and being ignorant and powerless, he grieves. When he sees another, the Lord, to be fully satisfied, then he (also), relieved from grief, attains His glory" (*Śvet Up* IV 7).

Here also (in the *Gītā*) there are the following passages to the same effect "This *prakṛti*, thus divided into eight principles consisting of the *āhaṁkāra* (and others), is Mine" (VII 4), "This is My lower *prakṛti*. But know, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), that which is other than this (lower one), which is life-constituting to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me" (VII 5), "At the conclusion of a *kalpa* (which brings the life of a *Brahmā* to an end), all beings, O Kaunteya, (are caused to) get into My *prakṛti*. I again create them at the commencement of the (first) *kalpa* (of the next *Brahmā*) Utilising the *prakṛti* which is My own, I again and again create this entire body of beings which is helpless on account of subjection to the *prakṛti*" (IX 7 &), "With Me as the witnessing overlord, the *prakṛti* gives birth to the world with (all its) movable and immovable beings. Indeed, for this reason it is, O Kaunteya, that the world goes on undergoing its transformations" (IX 10), "Understand also that the *prakṛti* and the individual self are, indeed—even both of them—without beginning" (XIII 19), "The womb (from which the universe is born) is the great *brahman* (or *prakṛti*) of Mine. I impregnate it. And from it, O Bhārata, is the birth of all beings" (XIV. 3). The meaning (of the last-quoted verse) is this "That great *brahman* of Mine which is the source of this world and is called the *prakṛti* and which is a non-intelligent entity representing the elements in a subtle state—in it I place the embryo known as the intelligent thing. From thence, that is, from the connection between the intelligent and non-intelligent things which is caused by Me, there results the origin of all these beings that begin with the gods

630. The female is the *prakṛti*, her lover is the individual self who is bound in *samsāra*, the other male being the released self

and end with immovable things and that are all thus mixed up with what is non-intelligent (i.e., matter)." In the *Śruti* also the subtle base of the material elements is denoted as the *brahman* thus : "From Him proceeds the undifferentiated creation (*brahman*), as also the world of matter and soul (*anna*) characterised by name and form" (*Mund. Up* I. 1.9)

Similarly, several (other) scriptural passages declare that the Highest Person forms the Self (of all), and that the intelligent and non-intelligent things have no separate existence from Him, because those intelligent and non-intelligent things, which exist in the form of the enjoyer and the thing enjoyed and which exist in all conditions, constitute the body of the Highest Person, and are, in consequence, subject to His control. These begin with "He who, dwelling in the earth, is within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is the earth, and who internally rules the earth—(He is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self)" and conclude with, "He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body is the self and who internally rules the self, He is your Internal Ruler and Immortal Self" (*Mādh Brh Up* III 7 3-22)

To the same effect is the passage beginning with, "He who is moving within the earth, whose body is the earth, whom the earth does not know He who is moving within the *mṛtyu* (or the *prakṛti*), whose body is the *mṛtyu*, whom the *mṛtyu* does not know. He is the Internal Self of all beings, He is devoid of sins, He is the Divine Lord, He is the one Nārāyaṇa" (*Sub Up* VII. 1) Here the word, '*mṛtyu*' (or 'death'), means that subtle non-intelligent thing which is expressed by the word, '*tamas*', because in this very *Upaniṣad* it is stated, "The *avyakta* is absorbed into the *akṣara*, and the *akṣara* is absorbed into the *tamas*" (*Ibid.* II),<sup>631</sup> and because it is stated also (elsewhere) "He who has entered within, is the ruler of things that are born and is the Self of all" (*Taitt. Ar* III 21).

Thus, the Highest Person Himself who, by having the intelligent and non-intelligent things existing in all conditions as His body, owns them as His modes, exists in the form of the world in its condition as cause as well as in its condition as effect. Accordingly, with the object of making this very thing known, some scriptural passages

<sup>631</sup> See Note 327.

say that the world in its condition as cause and also in its condition as effect is He Himself. They are those which begin with, "Existence alone, my dear child, this was in the beginning, one only without a second. It thought, 'May I become manifold and be born' It created *tejas*" (*Ch Up VI 2. 1, 3*), and (and with), "All these things which are born, my dear one, have their origin in the *Sat* (i.e., the Existent One), have their abode in the *Sat* and are established in the *Sat*. All this has That (*Brahman*) for its Self. That (*Brahman*) is existence. He is the Self. That you are, O Śvetaketu" (*Ch Up. VI 8 4, 6-7*). To the same effect is the following (scriptural passage) beginning with, 'He willed, 'May I become manifold and be born' He performed *tapas*<sup>632</sup>. Having performed *tapas*, He created all this," and concludes with, "While being the unchangeable individual self (*satya*) and the changeable matter (*anrita*), He has remained true to His own nature" (*Taitt. Up II 6 1*).

The distinction in nature that exists between the intelligent and non-intelligent things (on the one hand) and the Highest Person (on the other hand), and which is learnt from other scriptural passages as well, is brought to mind here also (i.e., in the following passage). "Entering into these three 'deities' (i.e., the elements of *tejas*, water and earth)<sup>633</sup> as the individual self which is Myself (qualified by it as body), I evolve the differentiations of name and form" (*Ch. Up VI 3 2*), and also in the passage "Having created that, He entered into the same (world). Having entered into that (world), He became the *sat* and the *tyat*. He became the intelligent thing and the non-intelligent thing. While thus being the unchangeable individual self and the changeable matter, He has remained true to His own nature" (*Taitt. Up II 6 1*).

The idea that the individual self has the *Brahman* for its Self, as made out from the expression, "Entering as this individual self, which is Myself" (*Ch Up VI. 3 2*)—that is understood to be dependent upon the relation of soul and body (existing between the *Brahman* and the individual self); because that expression has to import the

632 Here the performance of *tapas* or austerities merely means 'meditating' or 'thinking'.

633 The reference is to the elements of *tejas*, water and earth, as presided over by minor deities or the Supreme Person. This *Chândogya* text states the resolve of the Lord to differentiate. See *S. B.* (II. I. 5 and II. 4. 17).

same meaning as this passage "Having entered into that (world), He became the *sat* and the *tyat*"<sup>634</sup> He became the intelligent thing and the non-intelligent thing" (*Taitt Up* II 6 1) That differentiation of names and forms which is exactly of this very kind is mentioned here also "Indeed, this was then undifferentiated It has now been differentiated by means of names and forms" (*Bṛh Up* I 4 7)

Thus He who exists in the condition of effect, who exists in the condition of cause, and who owns the intelligent things and the non-intelligent things in their gross and subtle states as His body—He is the Highest Person alone Therefore, for the reason that the effect is nothing other than the cause (modified), and that, in consequence, the effect becomes known when the cause is known, the desired knowledge of all things as resulting from the knowledge of one thing is possible and very appropriate In the passage, "Entering into these three deities as this individual self, which is Myself (qualified by it as body), I evolve the differentiations of name and form" (*Ch Up* VI 3 2), all the non-intelligent things are referred to by the expression, "the three deities",<sup>635</sup> and then the differentiation of names and forms is said to result from the fact of the individual selves, which have him for their Self, entering into those things

Thus all significant words signify only that Highest Self who is associated with the individual selves and non-intelligent matter Therefore, the equating of the word which denotes an effect with the word which denotes the Highest Self in the condition of cause, has a real and natural significance Thus that *Brahman*, who owns the intelligent and non-intelligent things in their gross and subtle states as His modes—(He) is Himself the effect and the cause, and accordingly the world has the *Brahman* for its material cause The *Brahman* Himself forms the material cause of the world for the reason that the *Brahman* who owns the intelligent things and the non-intelligent things in their subtle state as His body, constitutes the cause (of all), nevertheless, by virtue of the material cause (of the world), being a composite thing (made up of the individual selves, the *prakṛti* and

634 ' *Sat* ' here means the individual self as it is not capable of undergoing transformations ' *tyat* ' refers to the *prakṛti* which goes through transformations

635 Though mention is made only of the three elements of *tejas*, water and earth, they are taken to be illustrative of all matter

the *Brahman*), the absence of mixing up of the natures of the *Brahman* and of the intelligent as well as of the non-intelligent things is perfectly possible and appropriate.

Thus, for instance, although a variegated woven cloth has for its material cause a mixture of white, black and red threads, the association of whiteness and the qualities of other such colours is to be found confined only to the region where a particular kind of thread exists, and accordingly, in the condition of effect also, there is no fusion of the colours in all the parts (of the cloth). Similarly, although the world has for its material cause the mixture of the intelligent thing, the non-intelligent thing and the Lord, nevertheless, in its condition as an effect also, there is no fusion of the characteristics of the enjoyer, of the thing enjoyed and of the controller, etc. These threads which are capable of existing independently, when they are occasionally brought together by the will of man, acquire the character of a cause and (also) the character of an effect. But here (i.e., in the case of the world) there is this much peculiarity, namely, that the intelligent and the non-intelligent things existing in all conditions, acquire their character of being things, only because they form the modes of the Highest Person through constituting His body, and that therefore the Highest Person who has those things as His modes is always denoted by all words. The existence of distinctions in nature and the fact that there is no mixing up are both alike here (i.e., in the case of the production of the world) as well as there (i.e., in the case of the production of the variegated cloth).

This being the case,<sup>636</sup> although the Supreme *Brahman* enters into the production of an effect, there being no transformation of His own nature, the immutability (of the Supreme *Brahman*) is well established. The condition of an effect is also very appropriate (in relation to the *Brahman*), for the reason that He is the Self<sup>637</sup> of the intelligent and the non-intelligent things in their gross state when they are differentiated by the divisions of names and forms. Indeed, to become an effect is nothing other than passing into another condition

<sup>636</sup> That is, as the texts declaring the *Brahman* to be immutable relate to His essential nature, and those describing Him as the material cause or the effect refer to Him as qualified by the attributes of individual selves and matter.

<sup>637</sup> The *Brahman* is the effect in the sense that He sustains and controls matter and the individual selves in the state of effect.

The scriptural statements declaring absence of attributes (in the *Brahman*) are also appropriate, because the Supreme Person is not in association with evil qualities. This scriptural passage which, in the portion— "He (i.e., the Self) is devoid of sins, free from death, free from sorrow, free from hunger, free from thirst"—negatives all evil qualities (in relation to the *Brahman*), and then lays down (His) auspicious qualities thus "He (the Self) desires the truth and wills the truth" (*Ck Up VIII 15*),—(this scriptural passage) alone settles that the negation of qualities which is declared elsewhere in the scriptures and is understood to be applicable in a general sense, relates (only) to evil qualities

The statement that the *Brahman* possesses the nature of intelligence is quite appropriate, because it amounts to saying that the true nature of the *Brahman* who is omniscient and omnipotent, who is opposed to all that is evil, and who is the mine of all auspicious qualities, is capable of being described only as intelligence, and that He has the nature of intelligence for the reason that He possesses self-luminousness. The following scriptural passages, along with others—"He who understands all and who knows all" (*Mund Up I 19*), "His supreme power is revealed, indeed, as varied and natural and as consisting of knowledge, strength and action" (*S'vet. Up VI 8*), and "My dear one, by what means has one to know the knower?" (*Bṛh Up II 4 14*)—teach that the *Brahman* is the knower, and this passage—"The *Brahman* is Existence, Knowledge (and Infinity)" (*Taitt Up II 1 1*), and others (teach that the *Brahman*) has the essential nature of intelligence, because He can be described only as intelligence, and because also He is self-luminous

In the passages—"He willed, 'May I become many'" (*Taitt Up. II 6 1*), "It thought, 'May I become many'" (*Ck Up IV 23*), and "It is differentiated by means of names and forms" (*Bṛh Up I 4.7*)—(it is declared) that the *Brahman* Himself exists, of His own free will, in various modes by reason of His possessing the wonderful unchangeable things and changeable things as His body, and that, in consequence, it is false to hold what is opposed to this, to the effect that there is manifoldness of things not having the *Brahman* for their Self.<sup>638</sup>

638 The manifoldness which is denied is that which fails to recognise that at the same time the universe is one with the *Brahman* in that it has Him for its Self. See *S B (I 4 19-22)* for a discussion of the *Bṛh Up.* texts



Therefore it is this (verreal manifoldness of things) that is negatived in the following and other passages "He who sees this world as though it were manifold (or varied) obtains death from death (i.e., passes from one embodiment to another in *samsāra*) There is nothing here that is many and varied" (*Brh Up* VI. 4 19 and *Kaṭh Up* IV 10), "But where there is duality (or the sense of being independent of the *Brahman*) as it were . . . there one sees another . . . But where to one all this becomes the Self . . . there by what (independent organ) can one (independently) see what (independent thing)? Who shall know which by what?" (*Brh Up* II 4 14 and IV 5 15) On the contrary, it is not also that manifold modality of the *Brahman* which is due to His assumption of various names and forms, which is established in scriptural passages such as, "May I become manifold and be born" (*Taitt Up.* II 6 1 and *Ch Up* VI 2 3), and in others, and which (again) is due to His own free will—(it is not this modality) that is negatived This (manifold modality) is proved to be existent in the commencement of even that passage which negatives (manifoldness) by saying, "But where to one all this becomes the Self (there who shall see whom by what and who shall know which by what)?" (*Brh Up* II 4 14 and IV. 5 15), and (it is also established to be existent) by means of the following and other passages "He who knows all things to be apart from Him, him will all things abandon" (*Ibid* II 4 6 and IV 5 7),<sup>639</sup> "That which is this *Rg-Veda* is the breath of Him, that is, of this Great Being" (*Ibid Up* II 4 10)<sup>640</sup>

Thus there is no contradiction whatsoever in relation to all those scriptural passages which speak of such distinctions in essence and in nature<sup>641</sup> as exist between the intelligent thing (or the individual self), the non-intelligent thing (or the *prakṛti*) and the Lord, and (there is no contradiction also) in regard to those scriptural passages which

639 Disparagement of the knowledge of anything as dissociated from the *Brahman* is made here See *S B* (I 4 19)

640. Under *S B* (I. 4. 19) it is explained that in this passage the *Brahman's* attribute of being the cause of the world is declared

641. Distinction in *svatīpa* and *svabhāva* may be taken to relate to those connected with the *dharma*n and the *dharma*s possessed by such *dharma*n. That is, distinctions in essential nature and in the attributes possessed are meant. In regard to each of the Lord, the individual self and matter, the attributes (*dharma*s) are different, and the essential nature of the possessor of the attributes (*dharma*n) is different.

speak of the relation of cause and effect (as existing between the *Brahman* and the universe) and (also in regard to those which speak) of the identity of the effect with the cause. The relation of body and soul exists at all times between the intelligent thing and the non-intelligent thing (on the one hand) and the Supreme Self (on the other). This is made out by means of the scriptural passages which declare that those things which form the body (of the Lord), acquire, when in the condition of cause, that subtle state which is incapable of being differentiated by means of names and forms, and acquire (again), when in the condition of effect, such a gross state as is capable of that differentiation by names and forms).

Therefore, there is seen to be no room whatsoever for maintaining the view (of the *Advaitins*) which imposes ignorance on the *Brahman*, and the view (of *Bhāskara*) which brings about distinctions in the *Brahman* Himself by means of limiting conditions, and all those other views (such as those of *Yadavaprakāśa* and others) which are based on fallacious reasoning and are contradictory to (the teaching of) all the scriptures. Thus, let this overlong discussion come to an end.

तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक्च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।

स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥ ३ ॥

3 What this *kṣetra* is, what it is like, what modifications it is liable to, from what cause (i.e., for what purpose) (it has sprung up) and (of) what (nature) it is—who he (the self) is, and of what powers—hear this briefly from Me

What this *kṣetra* is, that is, of what substance, what it is like, that is, of what it is the substratum,<sup>642</sup> what modifications it is liable to, that is, what its modifications are; from what cause (it has sprung up), the meaning being for what purpose it has been produced,<sup>643</sup> and what that is, of what nature it is—who he is, that is, who the *kṣetrajña* is, of what nature he is, of what powers, that is, what his powers are—all this, briefly, that is, in a concise form, hear from Me

642. The senses and other things are later pointed out to have the *kṣetra* as their substratum. See under verse 5.

643. The purpose is in the mind of the Lord (T. C.)

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विबिधै पृथक् ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥ ४ ॥

*1 Which has been declared (lit sung) variously by the sages, by the Vedas, varied (in modes of teaching) and differentiating (among the things taught), and likewise (dealt with) in the reasoned and conclusive words which constitute the Brakma-sūtras*

It is this truth about the *lāṣetra* and the *lāṣetrajña* that has been declared (lit sung) variously, that is, in manifold ways by Parīśara and other sages. For instance "I, you and so also others, O King, are borne (as by a flood) by material elements (taking the form of bodies). Fallen into the flowing stream of the *guṇas*, even the collection of material elements (i.e., the body) moves (and acts in various ways). These *guṇas*, the *sūttā* and others, O ruler of the earth, are under the influence of *karma*. *Karma* is accumulated by nescience (which mistakes what is not (the self) for the self), and this (*karma*) is in all creatures without exception. The self is pure, indestructible, immutably calm, devoid of the *guṇas* and is higher than the *prakṛti*" (V P II 13 69-71) <sup>644</sup>

Similarly "Because the body which is characterised by the head, the hands, and such other organs, is distinct from the *puruṣa* (or the individual self), which of these, O King, am I to designate by this name of 'I'?" (*Ibid* II 13 89) And also "Are you this head, or (are you) indeed the chest, or similarly your stomach? Or are you indeed the feet and other limbs, or is (all) this yours, O King? You remain distinct from the parts of your body, O King. Become intelligent, O King, and consider, 'Who am I?'" (*Ibid*, II 13 102-3) <sup>645</sup>

They declare that the two entities (the individual self and the *prakṛti*), which are thus distinct, have Vāsudeva for their Self. "The senses, the faculty of attention, the faculty of intellection,

<sup>644</sup> The sage, Bharata, known as *Jada* (the dull or the inert), is once forced to carry with others the palanquin of a king. He walks too slowly for others. The king asks him whether, in spite of his sturdy appearance, he is tired. The sage replies that he is not sturdy and that there is no reason for getting tired, as he is not really carrying the palanquin. How this can be is explained in the passage quoted above.

<sup>645</sup> The V P text generally reads 'grīvā' (or 'neck') in the place of 'uras' (or 'chest') in verse 102.

vigour, splendour, strength, courage,—these, as well as the *kṣetra* and the *kṣetrajña*, they (i.e., the *sūtras*) say, have Vāsudeva for their Self" (*M.B.* XIII 149 113)

By the *Vedas*, varied and differentiating, that is, by the *Vedas* known as the *Rk*, *Yajus*, *Sāman* and *Atharvan*, varied in their modes (of teaching), the nature of the body and that of the self have been declared so as to differentiate (them from one another) In the following passage, the nature of the body is thus set out "From that same Self, indeed, the ether of space was produced, from the ether, air, from air, fire, from fire, water, from water, the earth, and from the earth, plants; from plants, food, (and) from food, the *puruṣa* <sup>646</sup> This same *puruṣa*, indeed, is made up of the essence of food" (*Taitt Up* II 1 2). Afterwards that which is inner than this (body) and which is made up of the *prāṇa* (or the vital breath which maintains life), and that which is inner even than this and which is made up of the mind are spoken of And then the nature of the *kṣetrajña* is set out in the passage "Different from and inner than this which has been mentioned before and which is made up of the mind is that (individual self) which is made up of understanding, (it too is) the Self" (*Ibid* II 4 2) Finally, in the passage, "Different from and inner than this which is made up of the understanding is that which has an abundance of bliss, the (Supreme) Self" (*Ibid* II 5 2), is described the Highest Self having an abundance of bliss, as constituting the Inner Self even of the *kṣetrajña* (or the individual self) <sup>647</sup> Similarly, in the *Rg*, *Sāma*, and *Atharvana Vedas* also here and there the separate and independent existence of the *kṣetra* and the *kṣetrajña* and their having the *Brahman* for their Self are clearly declared <sup>648</sup>

Likewise in the words which constitute the *Brahma-sūtras*, in the words which are known as aphorisms treating of the *Brahman*, that is, in the *Sāriraka-sūtras* (or The Aphorisms on the Embodied),

646. The word, '*puruṣa*', usually standing for 'the self', here means 'the body of the embodied person'

647. This *Upamādic* context is discussed at length in *S B* (I : 13-18) The Self from which the ether of space is produced is declared successively to be the Internal Ruler of the body, of the vital breath maintaining life, of the mind and of the individual self, and is finally identified as the *Brahman* having an abundance of bliss

648. *T C.* cites as examples *Kauś Up* (III. 9), *Cā Up* (III. 14 4), *Mund Up* (II. 1. 2) and *Śvet. Up* (I 9 and VI. 9).

which are marked by reasoning and which are decisive, which are associated with logic and which end in settled conclusions.<sup>649</sup> In the *sūtras* beginning with, "The spatial ether is not (created), because there are no scriptural declarations to that effect" (*Ved Sū.* II. 3. 1),<sup>650</sup> the determination of the attribute (of being impermanent) which belongs to the *kṣetra* is stated. In the *sūtras* beginning with, "The individual self has no origination because there are scriptural statements to that effect and because also that it is eternal is made out from them (i.e., the scriptures)" (*Ibid.*, II. 3. 18), the determination is made of the true nature of the *kṣetrajñā*. That it has the Lord for its Self because of its being under the control of the Lord is taught in the *sūtra* "That (i.e., the power being the agent possessed by the individual self) is, however, from the Supreme Being, because the scripture says so" (*Ibid.* II. 3. 40).

The purport (of this stanza) is Hear about the real nature of the *kṣetra* and the *kṣetrajñā*, which, has been declared in manifold ways and which is being stated by Me concisely and very clearly

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।

इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥ ५ ॥

इच्छा द्वेषस्सुखं दुःखं सघातश्चेतना धृतिः ।

एतत् क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥ ६ ॥

5 The great elements, the *ahankāra*, the *buddhi*, the *avyakta*, the ten senses and the one, the five objects of the senses

6 Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain—thus, in brief, this *kṣetra*, which is a combination (of the elements) and which forms the support of the consciousness (or the intelligent self), has been described with its modifications

The great elements, the *ahankāra*, the *buddhi*, and the *avyakta* are substances that produce the *kṣetra*. The great elements are the

649 Śrī Śaṅkara renders 'Brahma sūtras' as 'sentences indicative of the Brahman' and cites *Bṛh Up* (I. 4. 7) in illustration

650 This aphorism sets out a view which is to be refuted. The accepted conclusion is that the ether of space is created. The other aphorisms referred to here are II. 3. 2-8, 10-12.

earth, water, fire, air and the ether of space. The *ahankāra* is (here) the *bhūtādi* <sup>651</sup>

The *buddhi* is the (principle called) *mahat*. The *avyakta* is the *prakṛti*. The ten senses and the one and the five objects of the senses are principles finding their support in the *kṣetra*. The ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose are the five organs of perception. The instrument of speech, hands, feet, the organ of excretion and the organ of reproduction are the five organs of action. These (senses and organs of action) are ten. The organ of internal perception (i.e., the *manas*) is one more. The objects of the senses are five—sound, touch, form, taste and smell <sup>652</sup>

Desire, aversion, pleasure and pain, being the effects of the *kṣetra*, are spoken of as the modifications of the *kṣetra*. Even though desire, aversion, pleasure and pain constitute attributes of the self, yet in regard to the self they result from its association with the *kṣetra*, they are thus the effects of the *kṣetra* and hence are said to be the modifications of the *kṣetra*. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will teach that they are the attributes of the *puruṣa* thus: "In relation to the experience of pleasure and pain, the soul (*puruṣa*) is said to be the cause" (XIII 20)

As regards the combination (of elements) which forms the support of the consciousness, <sup>653</sup> the term '*ādṛṣṭi*', means 'support', <sup>654</sup>

651 The *ahankāra* is of three kinds, *vaśīkāra*, *taṭasa* and *bhūtādi*. The first of these is *sāttvika* and gives rise to the sense organs. The *bhūtādi* which is *tāmāsa* is the source of the *tanmātras*. The *taṭasa* which helps the other two varieties is *rajasu*.

652 The chain of evolution of the material universe is thus set out in Sūkhya and accepted by the Vedānta. From the *avyakta prakṛti* or *pradhāna* which is matter in its primordial, unevolved form arise in order the *mahat* or *buddhi* (or 'the great principle' in which matter may be regarded as being first made manifest), the *ahankāra* (in which the tendency for individualisation may be regarded as first appearing), the *tanmātras* (or the subtle and rudimentary elements) characterised by *śabda*, sound, *spṛśa*, touch, *rūpa*, colour, *rasa*, taste and *gandha*, smell, the grosser elements of *ākāśa*, the ether of space, *vāyu*, air, *tejas*, light and heat, *ap*, water, and *pṛthivī*, the earth, the *manas* or mind, the senses of *śrotra*, hearing, *tvak*, touch, *cakṣus*, sight, *rasa*, taste, and *ghṛāṇa*, smell, and the organs of speaking, seizing (and working), walking, excretion and reproduction. All these are included in the *kṣetra*.

653 Śrī Śaṅkara construes *cetanādhṛti* as two distinct words, *cetana* (consciousness) and *dhṛti* (fortitude). As this consciousness is a mere semblance of the one undifferentiated consciousness which is the *ātman*, it belongs to the province of the *kṣetra*, the not self.

654. In the sense of being the basis for the enjoyment of pleasure and pain by the soul. The formation, *ādṛṣṭi*, is justified in T. C. on the basis of Pāṇini, 1.1.3.9, as derived from the root *ādhṛ*.

The combination of material elements has been produced as the support of the soul that experiences pleasure and pain and obtains (worldly) enjoyments and the bliss of final beatitude. It is made of substances beginning from the (primordial) *prākṛiti* and ending with the earth, it forms the support for the senses, it is possessed of the modifications of desire, aversion, pleasure and pain, it consists of a compound of elements, and it serves as the support for the experience of pleasure and pain by the intelligent self. This is what is spoken of as the *laṣṭra*. This *laṣṭra* has been described in brief, that is, succinctly with its modifications, that is, with its produced effects.

Now those qualities, which, among the produced effects of the *laṣṭra*, are worthy of being acquired on account of their being the means for obtaining the knowledge of the self, are declared.

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिराजैवम् ।

आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ ७ ॥

7 Freedom from arrogance, not being given to vain glorious display, freedom from the tendency to injure, forbearance, rectitude, service of a preceptor, purity, firmness, self-restraint

Freedom from arrogance is being free of disrespect towards those who are eminent. The practice of virtue for the sake of gaining fame as a virtuous person is vain glorious display. Freedom from it is not being given over to vain glorious display. Freedom from the tendency to injure is refraining from injuring others through speech, mind and body. Forbearance is the quality in one, even when injured by others, of maintaining the mind unchanged towards them. Rectitude is having one and the same attitude towards others in speech, mind and body. Service of a preceptor is being absorbed in prostrating, putting questions, performing service and such other acts of devotion in respect of the preceptor who teaches the knowledge of the self. Purity is the fitness of the mind, speech and body, as laid down in the *sāstras*, for the knowledge of the self and its attainment. Firmness is having unwavering faith in the teaching of the *sāstras* concerning the self. Self-restraint<sup>665</sup> is the turning away of attention from (all) objects that are different in essential nature from the self.

665. 'Atma-vinigraha' is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara as the regulation of the body and the senses.

इन्द्रियार्षेण वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।

जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. *Absence of desire in relation to the objects of the senses, and also freedom from egotism, the repeated perception of evil in birth, death, old age, illness and suffering*

Absence of desire in relation to the objects of the senses is fear of all objects other than the self by continuously bearing in mind that they are associated with evil. Freedom from egotism is being free of the mistaken regard as the self for the body which is other than the self. This is intended to be illustrative. Freedom from such feeling of ownership as its proper in regard to things belonging to oneself, in respect of things which do not belong to one, is also intended to be indicated. The repeated perception of evil in birth, death, old age, illness and suffering<sup>656</sup> is continuous reflection on the impossibility of avoiding the evil of birth, death, old age, illness and suffering, while possessing a body.

असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥ ९ ॥

9. *Freedom from attachment, absence of intense affection for son, wife, home and the like, constant equanimity of mind in the occurrences of both desired and undesired things*

Freedom from attachment is having no attachment towards (one's) possessions other than the self. Absence of intense affection for son, wife, home and the like is the state of being free of any regard for these beyond their due as being helpful towards the fulfilment of duties mentioned by the *śāstras*. Constant equanimity of mind in respect of the occurrences of both desired and undesired things is the state of being (free of joy or grief in regard to sudden happenings arising from (the efforts to achieve the satisfaction of) desire

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।

विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥ १० ॥

656 Or the evil of the suffering arising from birth, death, old age and disease



10. Devotion to Me with undeviating attention and associated with no other object, resorting to lonely places, distaste for (the company of) crowds

Firm devotion, associated exclusively with one object towards Me, who am the Lord of all, residing in places devoid of men and having no liking for crowds <sup>657</sup>

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्व तत्त्वज्ञानार्थचिन्तनम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञान यदतोऽन्यथा ॥ ११ ॥

11 Constant meditation on the knowledge relating to the self, reflection in order to attain knowledge of truth,—all this is declared to be the means for knowledge What is otherwise than this is ignorance

'*Adhyātmajñāna*' is knowledge relating to the self steady adherence to this reflection in order to attain knowledge of the truth, that is, to be always absorbed in that reflection which has for its object the knowledge of the truth <sup>658</sup> Knowledge is this by which the self is known (*i.e.*, realised) the meaning is that it is the means for the knowledge of the self To the self in association with the *kṣetra* (body), it is only the group of qualities mentioned above, beginning with freedom from arrogance, which is helpful for the realisation of the knowledge of the self All the products of the *kṣetra*, which are other than this, constitute ignorance, because they are against the knowledge of the self

Now, the essential nature of the *kṣetrajñā* (the individual self), who has been referred to in his character as the knower in the statement, " Him who knows it (*i.e.*, the body) " (XIII 2), is thoroughly examined

ज्ञेय यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।

अनादि मत्पर ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

657. That is, crowds of rude, uncultured and undisciplined persons (Śrī Śaṅkara)

658 The last word of the first line of the verse is read as '*cintanam*' by Śrī Rāmānuja and as '*darśanam*' by Śrī Śaṅkara

12 I shall (now) speak of that which is the thing to be known and by knowing which one attains the immortal (self)—the beginningless brahman to which I am superior and which can be said to be neither existent nor non-existent

I shall speak of that essential nature of the individual self<sup>659</sup> which is to be known, that is attained through freedom from arrogance and such other means, and by knowing which one realises the self as immortal, as free from birth, old age, death and such other material attributes

'Anādi' is that which has no beginning. Now, for this individual self, indeed, there is no origination. And for this reason, indeed there is no end. To this effect, the *Śruti* declares "The intelligent (self) is not born, nor does it die" (*Kath Up* II 18). 'Matpara' is what has Me for its superior.<sup>660</sup> Indeed, it has been said (earlier in the *Gītā*) "But know that which is other than this (lower one) and which is life-constituting to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me" (VII 5). For by reason of its being the body of the Lord, the essential nature of the self finds its joy only in complete dependence on the Lord. So, the *Śruti* declares "He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body is the self and who controls the self from within" (*Mādh Brh Up* III 7 22). Similarly, there are also such passages as the following "He is the cause, He is the Lord of what is the lord of the senses (i.e., of the individual self). He has no progenitor and no superior" (*Śvet Up* VI 9), and "He is the Lord of the *prakṛti* and of the individual selves and the regulator of qualities" (*Ibid*, VI 16).

659 Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva take the *jueyam* to be the Supreme Brahman.

660 'Anādi matparam brahma' in the second line of the verse is split by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'anādi mat' and 'param brahma', and by Śrī Rāmaṇuja as 'anādi' and 'matparam brahma'. Śrī Śaṅkara also notices the latter way of splitting up. Apparently, it was adopted by some school of *Bhedābheda* thinkers. For, according to Śrī Śaṅkara, they interpreted "that which is without beginning and of which I am the Supreme Energy named Vāsudeva". He points out the inconsistency in these thinkers, who denied attributes to the Brahman, postulating a supreme energy for Him. Śrī Rāmaṇuja constructs *anādi* and *matparam* without involving himself in such a contradiction because, in his view, the Brahman is full of every kind of auspicious attributes. Śrī Madhva prefers *anādi mat* and *param brahma*, rendering 'anādi mat' as 'being devoid of a body which is a thing having a beginning'.

The *brahman* is that which is associated with the quality of (infinite) extensiveness that is, it is a thing different from such things as the body, and free by itself of being conditioned by the body and such other things thus, it means the principle (of the individual self) which cognises the *Ātma*. For it is revealed in the *Śruti*: "He (i.e., the atomic individual self) too becomes fit for infinity" (*Svet Up V 9*). Its being conditioned by the body is brought about by its *karma*. This infinity is only in regard to one emancipated from the bonds of *karma*.

The word, '*brahman*', is applied to the (pure) individual self also in the following passages (of the *Gītā*) "He, rising above these *gunas*, becomes fit for the state of *brahman* (or the self in its essential purity)" (XIV 26), "For I am the basic support of the *brahman* who is indestructible and immortal" (XIV 27) and "Having realised the state of the *brahman*, and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. The same to all beings, he attains supreme devotion for Me" (XVIII 54).

This (*brahman*) is said to be neither existent nor non-existent<sup>661</sup>. By the words, 'existent' and 'non-existent', the essential nature of the self cannot be denoted, because of its being without the two states comprising effect and cause. However, it is said to be existent, while in the state of effect, because of its possessing names and forms like those of the gods etc. Being incapable of (having) these (names and forms) while in the condition of cause, it is stated to be non-existent. Accordingly, we have *Śruti* texts like the following "Non-existent, indeed, was This (*Brahman*) in the beginning, from It the existent was born" (*Taitt Up II 7 1*), and "Indeed, this was then undifferentiated. It has now been differentiated by names and forms" (*Bṛh Up I 4 7*). The association of the self with the two states of effect and cause, however, is brought about by its being wrapped around by the ignorance consisting of *karma*, it is not brought about by its essential nature. Because of this, the essential nature of the self is not described by the words, 'existent' and 'non-existent'. If it is said that, in the text, "Non-existent, indeed, This was in the beginning" (*Taitt Up II 7 1*), the Supreme *Brahman* in the causal state is spoken of—none the less, the Supreme *Brahman*, while in the condition of cause, has for His body the intelligent and non-intelligent

661. Śrī Sankara understands by this that the Supreme *Brahman* is beyond the range of all affirmative and negative propositions.

things in a subtle state, incapable of being differentiated by names and forms; hence the nature of the body and of the individual self in the causal state can also be denoted by the word, 'non-existent'. But, this state of the individual self is brought about by *karma*. Thus the essential nature (of the self) in its purity cannot be indicated by the words, 'existent' and 'non-existent' <sup>662</sup>

सर्वतः पाणिपाद तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।

सर्वतश्चक्षुषिर्मलोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ १३ ॥

13. This (*brahman*) is possessed everywhere of hands and feet, has everywhere, eyes, heads and mouths, and is possessed everywhere of ears. It stands enveloping everything in the world.

This (*brahman*) is possessed everywhere of hands and feet, that is, it is in the essential nature of the self in its purity to be capable of performing everywhere the work of hands and feet. Thus, too, it has everywhere eyes, heads and mouths and is everywhere possessed of ears that is, it performs everywhere the work of eyes and such other organs. The scripture declares "He is without hands and feet, but He moves quickly and seizes (things) without eyes He sees, without ears He hears" (*Svet Up* III 19) thus, the Supreme *Brahman*, even though He is without hands and feet, is said to do everywhere the work of hands, feet and such other organs. With reference to the individual self also, in its state of purity, it is indeed determined in the scriptures that it has the capacity of performing the work of hands, feet and such other organs everywhere, because of its attaining equality with Him (i.e., the Supreme *Brahman*) <sup>663</sup>. The scripture, indeed, states "Thus, the wise seer, shaking off merit and demerit, and being untainted, attains the highest degree of equality (with the *Brahman*)" (*Mund Up* III 1 3). He (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa*) will also teach later on "Those

662 The terms, 'existent' and 'non-existent', are used with reference to the *Brahman* in the conditions of effect and cause, mediately through the selves and matter which suffer these conditions. So they may be used of the selves also. But as these are brought about in the selves through *karma* and do not appertain to their essential nature the two terms should not properly be used of them (*T. C.*)

663. *T. C.* refers to an unacceptable view to the effect that this verse teaches the association of the Lord, who is the Self of the universe, with the hands and other organs taken up by the selves through *karma* and those taken up by Himself out of His own free will.

who have resorted to this knowledge and attained the same qualities which characterise Me " (XIV 2)

It stands enveloping everything in this world that is, whatever totality of things there may be in the world, it (*i e*, the self) remains pervading all this. The meaning is that its essential nature in its purity, being free of the limitation of space and other such limitations, reaches everywhere<sup>664</sup>

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभास सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।

असक्त सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुण गुणभोक्तृ च ॥ १४ ॥

14 Shining with the functions of all the senses, but devoid of all the senses, unattached and yet supporting all, devoid of the *gunas* (of the *prakṛti*) and yet the enjoyer of the *gunas*

Shining with the functions of all the senses that is, that of which the shining is through the functions of all the senses is that which is shining with the functions of all the senses.<sup>665</sup> The *gunas* of the senses are the functions of the senses. The meaning is that it (*i e*, the self) is capable of cognising objects even through the functions of the senses. Yet it is by nature devoid of all the senses. The meaning is that, without the functions of the senses at all, of its own accord, cognises everything<sup>666</sup>. It is unattached, that is, by nature free from attachment to the bodies of gods and of others (with which it may get associated) yet supporting all, that is, capable of maintaining all bodies, such as those of the gods. For there are such scriptural texts as "He is one, is threefold." (*Ck Up VII 26 2*)<sup>667</sup>. It is devoid of the *gunas*, that is, by nature free from *sattva* and other *gunas*, and

664 Though the individual self is atomic, it pervades the universe through its *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*. See *S B* (IV. 4 15)

665 *T C* contrasts this with Śrī Śankara's view that the *jñeyam* or the Supreme *Brahman* is to be regarded as if busy with the functions of the senses, and with the view of another commentator that the nature of the *jñeyam* becomes manifest through the activities of the senses

666 The self, in its pure state, is omniscient, even in the absence of the senses. But it has then the potential capacity to cognise with the help of the senses also (*T C*)

667 The individual self becomes threefold, etc., only with the help of the bodies it assumes. This is implied by way of reply to the view that the supporter of all is the substratum on which all erroneous notions are superimposed (*T C*)

yet (it is) the enjoyer of the *gunas*, that is, it has the potential capacity to enjoy *sattva* and other *gunas*

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचर चरमेव च ।

सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेय दूरस्थ चान्तिके च तत् ॥ १५ ॥

15. *Within and without (all) embodiments, unmoving and also moving, it is not distinctly knowable on account of its subtlety. It stands far away and (is) also very near*

Leaving the elements, like the earth and others, it (i.e., the self) remains outside (them), have no body. It also remains within them while engaged in activities undertaken in fulfilment of its own own desires and (that there are such activities is) established in scriptural passages like the following "Eating, playing and enjoying either in the company of women or with vehicles" (*Ck Up VIII 12 3*)<sup>668</sup> It is unmoving and also moving, that is, it is by nature unmoving, but while in the state of being embodied, it is moving. On account of (its) subtlety it is not distinctly knowable. This principle of the self which is thus possessed of all powers and is omniscient, is not distinctly knowable, because of its extreme subtlety, as different from the body, although it remains within the body, by those in *samsāra*<sup>669</sup> It stands far away and is also near. To men, who do not have freedom from arrogance and the other qualities mentioned above, and whose qualities are the opposite of these, it is very far away, even though it remains in one's own body. Similarly, to those having freedom from arrogance and such other qualities, that same (self) is very near.

अविभक्त च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।

भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १६ ॥

16. *Moreover, undivided and yet remaining as though it were divided among beings, this (self) is to be known as the supporter of elements, that which consumes (them) and that which causes (the) production (of young ones)*

668 This refers to the released self who is described thus "He moves about (in the Highest Heaven), eating, playing, and enjoying in the company of women or with vehicles or in the company of relatives." For such purposes, the released self assumes bodies.

669 Even to the *yogins* the realisation of the self is not as clear and full as to the *muktas* (T. C.)

The substance known as the self is found everywhere in the bodies of gods, men and others : it is undivided, because, in being the knower, it has the same form (everywhere) <sup>670</sup> Yet, so far as the ignorant are concerned, it remains as though it were divided by such forms as those of the gods thus " This is a god, (this is) a man "

It has indeed been stated at the beginning (of this chapter) in the verse, " him who knows this " (XIII. 1), that, though the self is thought of by means of a grammatical equation with the body in such expressions as " I am a god, I am a man ", yet, because of its being the knower, it can be known as an entity distinct from the body Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says that it can be known (as distinct from the body) in other ways also—as the supporter of the elements and so on

That which is the supporter of the earth and other elements combined in the form of the body, that (self) is to be known as an entity distinct from the elements to be supported by it. The meaning is that it can be (thus) known as a distinct entity Similarly, it is that which consumes, that is, the consumer of such products of the physical elements as food it can be known as an entity distinct from the elements consumed by it, because of its being the consumer

It is also that which produces, that is, the cause of production It is the cause of the production (into semen and embryo) of the food and other things consumed and changed into other forms (like blood and such things) The meaning is that it can be known as an entity distinct from these

As eating, producing and such activities are not seen in a dead body, it is a settled conclusion that the body which is a combination of elements cannot be the cause of consuming (food), producing (young ones) and supporting (the elements) <sup>671</sup>

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमस परमुच्यते ।

ज्ञान ज्ञेय ज्ञानगम्य हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥ १७ ॥

<sup>670</sup> The one *Brahman*, like the ether of space, is undivided in various bodies (Śrī Śaṅkara)

<sup>671</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara takes this verse to refer to the creation—which is a false appearance like the illusion of a snake in a rope in maintenance and dissolution of the universe

17. *This (self), the light even of light-giving objects, is said to be other than matter. It is to be known as knowledge. It is to be attained through (the means of) knowledge. It is present with a special relationship in the hearts of all.*

This (self) alone is the light, the illuminer even of light-giving objects like the sun, the lamp, the gem, etc. What causes the lamp, the sun, and such other things to shine is only knowledge which is the effulgent light of the self. But the lamp and such other (light-giving) things merely bring about the destruction of the universal darkness<sup>672</sup> that stands in the way of the contact between the sense (of vision) and its objects. To this extent alone is their illuminating power.

It is said to be other than matter (or *tamas*). The word, '*tamas*', describes the *prakṛti* in its subtle state. The meaning is that it (the self) is said to be other than (or superior to) the *prakṛti*. Hence it is to be known as knowledge, that is, to be known as being solely of the form of knowledge. This (self) is also to be attained through (the means of) knowledge. The meaning is that it is to be attained by the means of knowledge, such as freedom from arrogance already described. It is present with a special relationship in the hearts of all<sup>673</sup> that is, it is particularly placed, present in the hearts of all beings like men and others.

इति क्षेत्र तथा ज्ञान ज्ञेयं चोक्त समासत ।

मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भाषायोपपद्यते ॥ १८ ॥

18. *Thus the kṣetra (i.e., the body) has been briefly described as also knowledge and the object of knowledge. Knowing well this, My devotee becomes fit to attain to My state.*

672 This is *santarāsa*, the darkness which would prevail universally in the absence of light. Darkness is the absence of light. The theory of visual perception here implied is this. In the presence of light, a kind of aura called *āloka* travels from the eye to the object seen. When the *āloka* meets the object, there is contact (*sannikarṣa*) between the organ of sense and its object and perception results.

673 The presence of the self in the heart as the experiencer is the special relationship: or it is present itself in the heart, while it pervades the rest of the body through its attribute of knowledge (T. O.).



Thus, by the passage beginning with "The great elements, the *akṣhara*" (XIII. 5) and ending with "which is a combination (of the elements) and which forms the support of the consciousness" (XIII. 6), the principle of the *kṣetra* has been briefly described. By the passage beginning with "Freedom from arrogance" (XIII. 7) and ending with "reflection in order to attain knowledge of truth" (XIII. 11), the knowledge, which is the means for attaining the principle of the self which has to be known, has been taught. And by the passage beginning with "the beginningless *brahman* to which I am superior" (XIII. 12) and ending with "is present with a special relationship in the hearts of all" (XIII. 17), the real nature of the *kṣetrajña* (the individual self) which is the object of knowledge has been briefly described.<sup>674</sup>

My devotee, knowing well this, that is, the nature of the *kṣetra*, the nature of the means for realising the essential nature of the self apart from the *kṣetra*, and the nature of the *kṣetrajña*, becomes fit to attain to My state. That which is My state is (My) own nature, that is, not being subject to the round of births and deaths. The meaning is that he becomes fit<sup>675</sup> to attain the state free from the round of births and deaths.

Then, the beginninglessness of the association between the *prakṛti* and the self which are of radically different natures, the difference in the functions of these two when in association with each other, and the cause of this association are stated

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विदधनादी उभावपि ।

विकाराश्च गुणाश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ॥ १९ ॥

19 Know that the *prakṛti* and the self are both without beginning and know that the modifications (such as desire and aversion) and the qualities (such as freedom from arrogance) are born of the *prakṛti*

Know that both the *prakṛti* and the self are in constant association with each other and are beginningless.<sup>676</sup> Know that desire,

674 Śrī Śaṅkara observes that so far—in the thirteenth chapter—the entire teaching of the *Vedas* and that of the *Gitā* have been briefly taught.

675. The intention here is to point out that in the conditions set out one becomes qualified in the sense of having the fitness produced by 'knowledge' (T. C.)

676. Śrī Śaṅkara refers to and refutes an interpretation of *anādi* as *na ādi* (not existent at the beginning, that is, having a beginning)

aversion and such other modifications (*vikāras*), which constitute the cause of bondage, and freedom from arrogance and such other qualities (*gunas*) which constitute the cause of salvation, are all born from the *prakṛti*. This *prakṛti*, active from time without beginning, having evolved into the form of the body and being in association with the self, becomes the cause of the bondage (of the self) through its own modifications such as desire and aversion. The same *prakṛti*, through its own modifications like freedom from arrogance and such others, becomes the cause of the salvation (of the self). Such is the purport

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।

पुरुषस्सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ २० ॥

20 The *prakṛti* is said to be responsible for agency in relation to the body (*kārya*) and the sense-organs (*kāraṇa*) The self is said to be responsible for the experiencing of pleasure and pain

The *kārya* (or the effect) is the body The *kāraṇas* are the sense organs of perception and action, along with the internal organ of perception In their being performers of work, the *prakṛti*, ruled over by the self, is alone responsible.<sup>677</sup> The meaning is that (their) activities, which are the means of experience, have their basis in the *prakṛti*, which has evolved into the form of the body ruled over by the self. In regard to the self, there is only the state of being the ruler With reference to this, the aphorisms, "The agent of actions is (the individual self) because the scripture has to be purposive" (*Ved Sū* II 3. 33), and others have been taught The agency of the self is really its being responsible for the activity of the will in ruling over the body. The self, while in association with the *prakṛti*, is responsible for

677 Śrī Śaṅkara reads *kārya kāraṇa karitṛvo*, though he also notices *kāraṇa* as a variant reading. *Kārya*, in his view, is the body the *kāraṇas* are the ten sense-organs, *manas*, *buddhi* and *aśaṅkāra* The alternative reading also may support this interpretation Or it may mean that the *kārya* refers to the sixteen principles which are modifications, namely, the ten sense-organs, *manas* and the five objects of senses The *kāraṇas* would be the seven principles each of which is a modification of its predecessor and gets modified into its successor—*mahat*, *aśaṅkāra* and the five *tanmātras*. These are called *prakṛti-vikṛtis* T. C. also notices another interpretation that the *kārya* is the five elements and *tanmātras*, and the *kāraṇa*, the ten senses, the *manas*, the *buddhi* and the *aśaṅkāra* (Both the words, ' *kāraṇa* ' and ' *kāraṇa* ', may be taken to mean the senses )

the experience of pleasure and pain. The meaning is that it is the seat of the experience of pleasure and pain.

Thus the distinction in the functions of the *prakṛti* and of the self, when in mutual association, has been stated<sup>678</sup>. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa now) proceeds to state that the self is the cause of the experience of pleasure and pain arising from sense-objects, even though, by itself, its experience of itself is nothing but joy.

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्यो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणान् ।

21. *Indeed, the self, seated in the prakṛti, experiences (the effects of) the qualities born of the prakṛti.*

The word, '*guna*' (quality), stands figuratively for its effects. The self, whose experience of itself, by itself, consists solely of happiness, enjoys, that is, experiences, when seated in the *prakṛti*, that is, when in association with the *prakṛti*, the qualities born of the *prakṛti*, that is, the pleasure and pain and other things, which are the effects of *salva* and other *gunas* and which have for their special cause association with the *prakṛti*.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) then speaks of the cause of (the self's) association with the *prakṛti*.

कारण गुणसङ्गोज्ज्वलसदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥ २१ ॥

21. *The cause for its births in good and evil bodies is its attachment to the gunas (of the prakṛti).*

This self, placed successively in the bodies of different beings like the gods, men etc., which are in the form of modifications of the *prakṛti*, becomes attached to such things as pleasures and pains,<sup>679</sup> arising from

678 Our actions are physical and determined by physiological needs. 'But that which experiences pleasure and pain cannot be the *prakṛti*, which is *yada* or inert. Experience has no meaning except in relation to one who is conscious of it. The power to enjoy and experience belongs to the soul, while the raw matter of experience owes its origin to the association of the body with the soul.' (L G III, p. 39). The self prompts and experiences, the body works.

679 T. C. explains attachment to pains as arising from the false notion that they are pleasures.

the *sattva* and other qualities associated with each one of these bodies, and hence engages itself in works of virtue (*punya*) and sin (*pāpa*) which constitute the means for these (pleasures etc.). Then, for the purpose of experiencing the results of virtue and sin arising from these (acts), it is born again in good (*sat*) or evil (*asat*) bodies.<sup>680</sup> Then it begins activities and thereby is born again. As long as it does not develop freedom from arrogance and such other qualities which are the means of realising the self, so long it remains in *samsāra*. Therefore, this has been said that its attachment to the *gunas* (of the *prakṛti*) is the cause of its births in good and evil bodies.

उपद्रष्टाऽनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन् पुरुष परः ॥ २२ ॥

22 *The self in this body is one who looks on and approves, is the supporter and the enjoyer, and is spoken of as the great lord and likewise the self that is supreme (in relation to the body)*

This self (*puruṣa*), who abides in this body, is one who looks on and approves in relation to the body through the functioning of the will and such other faculties in a manner appropriate to the activities of the body.<sup>681</sup> Similarly, it is the supporter of the body. Likewise, it is the experiencer of the pleasure and pain arising from the activities of the body.

Thus, by ruling over the body, by supporting the body and by having the body completely dependant, it becomes the great lord in relation to the body, the senses and the mind. Accordingly, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will also declare "Whatever body the ruler (i.e., the self) acquires and from whatever body it departs, it goes on its way, taking these (sense-organs), as the wind (moves along), taking away odours from their place" (XV 8)

In the body, it should also be spoken of as the supreme self in relation to the body, the senses and the mind. The word, 'self' (*ātman*), will be used hereafter in the sense of the body and of the

680 See Ch. Up (V 10 7) (T C)

681. *Upadrakṣṭṛ* is one who observes (and impels) some one else to work, himself unengaged in work. *Anumanṭṛ* is one who permits activity after it has begun (T C)

mind : "Some see the self within the body by means of the mind through meditation" (XIII. 24). From the word, 'likewise' (*apti*), it is to be made out that it has also been described as the great lord (in relation to the body). The self that is supreme has been described in passages beginning with "the beginningless (one), to whom I am superior" (XIII. 12). This self which has (in its pure state) unlimited power and knowledge, becomes the great lord only with reference to the body and the supreme self only with reference to the body, on account of its attachment to the *gunas* arising out of immemorial association with the *prakṛti*:

य एन वेति पुरुष प्रकृति च गुणैस्सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ २३ ॥

23 He who knows the self to be thus and the *prakṛti* along with the *gunas* (to be as described) is never born again, howsoever he may be placed

He who knows, that is, knows truly and with discrimination, the self to be thus,<sup>682</sup> as having the character described above, and likewise the *prakṛti* to be of the character described above, together with the *gunas* like *sattva* whose character will be later dealt with, is never born again, does not become fit for association with the *prakṛti* again, howsoever he may be placed, that is, in whatever extremely painful manner he lives in the bodies of gods, men, etc. The meaning is that at the time of dissolution of that body (in which he is now living), he attains the self having unlimited knowledge as its distinguishing characteristic and devoid of sins

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।

अन्ये साङ्ख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥ २४ ॥

24 Through meditation by the mind, some see the self within the body, others by the yoga called *Sāṅkhya*, and yet others by *karma-yoga*

<sup>682</sup>Some whose mental concentration is perfected see the self (*ātmanam*) abiding in the body (*gātmanī*) by means of the mind (*ātmanā*) through meditation that is, concentration of the

682 Sri Śaṅkara reads 'evam' for 'e'

683. In this and the next verse several stages in the knowledge of the self are described, starting with the highest

mind. Others to whom concentration of the mind remains unaccomplished make the mind fit for concentration by means of the *yoga* called *Sāṅkhya*,<sup>684</sup> that is, by the discipline of knowledge, and then see the self (through concentrated meditation). Yet others—those who are not qualified for the discipline of knowledge, those who are qualified for it but are intent on an easier way, and those who are distinguished persons<sup>685</sup>—(all these) after making the mind acquire fitness for concentration by means of the *karma-yoga* which includes within itself knowledge (of the self), see the self.

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्त श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।

तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्यु श्रुतिपरायणा ॥ २५ ॥

25 But some others, not knowing thus, hear from others and meditate. They also cross beyond death. So too, those who are devoted to hearing (the true teaching)

But others, that is, those who are not qualified for *karma-yoga* and other means for seeing the self, hear from others who are possessed of knowledge and seers of truth, and meditate (on the self) with the help of *karma-yoga* and similar means. They too cross beyond death. Those who are devoted to hearing are those who are devoted only to hearing. Even they, devoted to hearing and (thereby) freed of sins, duly begin the practice of *karma-yoga* and other such means and (in due course) certainly cross beyond death. By the word, 'too' (*api*) difference in stages is to be understood (among the various types of persons striving to see the self).<sup>686</sup>

Then, in order to explain how to meditate on the discrimination of the self associated with the *prakṛti* (from that *prakṛti*), He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says that all beings, moving and unmoving, are sprung from the association between the intelligent (self) and non-intelligent (matter).

684 Śrī Sāṅkara understands by 'Sāṅkhya' the discrimination of the *ātman* from the *guṇas*, while Śrī Madhva takes it mean the nature of the Lord, as revealed in the *Vedas*.

685 Compae III. 20

686. Only one class of aspirants is referred to in this verse, according to Śrī Sāṅkara.

यावत्संजायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥ २६ ॥

26 Whenever any creature is born, whether it is animate or inanimate, know that this (birth), in each case, is on account of the association of the *kṣetra* (the body) and the *kṣेत्रज्ञा* (the self), O Arjuna (*Bhāratārṣabha*)

To whatever extent creatures are born, consisting of those which are animate and those which are inanimate, they are born only from the mutual association between the *kṣetra* and *kṣेत्रज्ञा* 687 The meaning is that they are born only from (this) association and not from (their) separation from each other

सम सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्त परमेश्वरम् ।

विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्त यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ २७ ॥

27 Who so sees the supreme ruler abiding in all embodiments to be (of) the same (nature), nor being destroyed in destructible things, he sees (the self as it is)

Who so sees the self, in all embodiments which consist in what is different (namely, the body) being in association with what is different (namely, the self), as different from the varied forms of gods and others as remaining in each of these in the capacity of the supreme ruler in relation to the body, the senses and the mind, as being of the same nature (in all of them) on account of being the knower, and as not being destroyed, on account of being of a nature incapable of destruction, when those bodies perish—he sees, that is, he sees the self as it really is. The intention is to teach that the who sees even the self as being of varied forms on account of the varied forms of gods and others and as associated with birth, death and such other conditions, is indeed endlessly involved in the cycle of births and deaths

सम पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमोक्षरम् ।

न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ २८ ॥

687. Śrī Śaṅkara says that the relationship between the *kṣetra* and the *kṣेत्रज्ञा* is governed by *adhyāsa* (or superimposition giving rise to erroneous knowledge).

28. *For, seeing the ruler (i.e., the self) abiding (and exercising authority) everywhere (in all bodies), he does not harm the self by his mind and thereupon reaches the highest goal*

The self abides everywhere, in the bodies of gods and others, as the ruler by reason of its being the support and the controller, in virtue of its being the proprietor in every case. He who sees the self as devoid of the varied forms of gods and others and as being of the sole form of knowledge, by himself (*ātmanā*), that is, by his mind, he does not harm,<sup>688</sup> that is, he protects his own self, frees it from *samsāra*. Thereupon, that is, in consequence of this vision of the sameness of the form (of the self) everywhere as the knower, he reaches the highest goal. What is to be reached by going is the goal. He reaches that which is supreme and is to be attained, that is, the self as it really is. If he sees the self as varied everywhere on account of its being in association with the forms of gods and others, he harms the self, that is, throws it into the middle of the sea of *samsāra*.

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वश ।

यः पश्यति तथाऽऽत्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥ २९ ॥

29. *He who sees actions universally as being done by the prakṛti alone and the self similarly as not the agent, sees (the self as it is)*

He who sees all actions as done by the *prakṛti*, in the manner explained in the statement, "The *prakṛti* is said to be responsible for agency in relation to the body and the sense-organs" (XIII-20) who sees accordingly that the self, being of the form of knowledge,<sup>689</sup> is not the agent and who sees that its association with the *prakṛti*, its ruling over the same and its experience of the pleasure and pain resulting from this are all brought about by ignorance in the form of *karma*—he sees indeed the self as it really is.

688. 'Na āśaśat' is interpreted by Śrī Sāṅkara as 'does not kill'. He explains that the ignorant man regards his body as his *ātman* and by continuing in *samsāra* goes on killing one *ātman* after another. Even the Supreme *Ātman* is killed as it were by *avidyā* while ignorance lasts.

689. T. C. notices another reading, 'jñānābhārah', for 'jñānākaraṇ' in the *bhāṣya* text.



यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्वमनुपश्यति ।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सपद्यते तदा ॥ ३० ॥

30 When one understands the independent individuality of embodied beings as rooted in one basis, as also their evolution from it alone, then he attains the brahman (or the self in its purity)

When one sees that, while all embodied beings, like gods and others, are constituted of the two principles of the *prakṛti* and the self, their independent individuality as divine, human, short, long, and so on, is rooted in one basis—is rooted in the *prakṛti* and not in the self<sup>690</sup>—and when he sees their evolution into sons, grandsons and such other different beings in succession, as from it alone,<sup>691</sup> that is, from the *prakṛti* only, then alone he attains the *brahman*. The meaning is that he attains the self as free from limitations and as solely of the form of knowledge

अनादित्वाभिर्गुणत्वात्परमात्माज्यमव्ययः ।

शरीरस्योऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥ ३१ ॥

31 This supreme self, though remaining in the body, is immutable on account of its being without beginning: and neither acts, nor gets stained, O Arjuna (Kauṁṭeya), in virtue of its being free from the *gunas*

This supreme self has been described as having an essential nature distinct from that of the body. Though remaining in the body, it is immutable, that is, devoid of liability to decay, by reason of its being beginningless, that is, such as cannot have begun (to live at any particular moment). On account of its being without the *gunas*, that is, being devoid of the *satva* and other *gunas* of the *prakṛti*, it does not act, nor does it get stained that is, it does not get stained by the qualities of the body.

Granted that the self, by reason of its being free from the *gunas*, does not act but how is it that it is not stained when it is eternally

690. According to Śrī Śaṅkara the basis is the one and only Self

691. For all this evolution, the presence of the self is needed. But it is not required that the self should be liable to the changes undergone by the vehicle of its experience (T. C.).

associated with the qualities of the body ? In reply, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here says):

यथा सर्वगत सौक्ष्म्यादाकाश नोपलिप्यते ।

सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥ ३२ ॥

32. *As the all-pervading ether is not tainted by reason of its subtlety, even so the self, though stationed in the body everywhere, is not tainted*

As the ether, though all-pervading, that is, in contact with all things, is not tainted by the qualities of all (these) things by reason of its subtlety, even so the self, though stationed in the body, everywhere, that is, in gods, men etc., is not tainted by reason of its exceeding subtlety,<sup>692</sup> by the qualities of all these bodies

यथा प्रकाशयत्येक कृत्स्न लोकमिम रवि ।

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्न प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ ३३ ॥

33. *As a single sun lights up all this world, even so the lord of the body (kṣetṛin) lights up all the body, O Arjuna (Bhārata) !*

As a single sun,<sup>693</sup> by his radiance, lights up all this world, even so the lord of the body lights up, by his own knowledge, the entire body, both inside and outside and from the soles of the feet to the head, making out, "This body of mine is of this kind" Hence the meaning is that this self, whose characteristics have been thus described, is altogether distinct, because of its being the knower, from this body which constitutes the object to be known, even as the sun which lights up (the world) from the world which is lighted up

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तर ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।

भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥ ३४ ॥

34. *Those who thus know, with the aid of the eye of knowledge, the difference between the body and the knower of the body, as also the means*

692 The self is subtler than the ether and even its ultimate source, the primordial prakṛti.

693. According to Śrī Śaṅkara, the simile of the sun in this verse shows that there is only one kṣetṛin for all bodies and that He remains uncontaminated.

*of release from the prakṛti in the form of material elements (constituting the body)—they reach the highest*

Those who know thus, in the manner described, the difference (*antaram*), that is, the distinction between the body and the knower of the body, with the help of the eye known as that knowledge which deals with what discriminates<sup>694</sup> and (know) also the way of release from the *prakṛti* in the form of material elements (constituting the body)<sup>695</sup>—they attain the highest, that is, the self completely freed from bondage

'*Mokṣa*' is that by means of which release is effected. The meaning is that it is the means of release such as freedom from arrogance and other qualities already described. Those who, through the knowledge already taught relating to the distinction between the body and the self, understand the distinction between them, and then, after learning that freedom from arrogance and such other qualities constitute the means of release from the *prakṛti* which has evolved into the material elements (constituting the body), put (the qualities) into practice—they, completely freed of bondage, attain the self characterised by unlimited knowledge and abiding in its own form.

694. What has been taught so far is the eye of knowledge, because it leads to the direct realisation of the self, even as the eye is an instrument of direct perception (*T C*)

695. '*Bhūta-pravṛtti-mokṣam*' can be understood, according to *T C*, as release from the *prakṛti* made up of *bhūtas* or elements, or as the release of the individual selves (*bhūtas*) from the *prakṛti*. Śrī Śaṅkara renders it as deliverance from the *avyakta* which is characterised by nescience and is the cause of all beings. In Śrī Mādhva's view, it is the means of deliverance from the elements and from the *prakṛti*.

## CHAPTER XIV

In the thirteenth (chapter) it has been stated that one is released from bondage with the help of freedom from arrogance and other qualities helped by devotion to the Lord, after learning the truth about the nature of the *prakṛti* and the self which are associated with each other. There in the passage, "The cause of its birth in good and evil bodies is its attachment to the *guṇas*" (XIII 21) it has been stated that the cause of bondage is attachment to happiness and such other things which are modifications (i.e. results) of the *saṁsāra* and other *guṇas* (of the *prakṛti*) continuing in succession from the past. Now in this chapter is described the manner in which the *guṇas* form the cause of bondage and the manner in which the *guṇas* can be stopped (from influencing the self) <sup>696</sup>

श्रीमद्भगवानुवाच—

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयस्सर्वे परा सिद्धिमितो गता ॥ १ ॥

### THE LORD SAID

*1 I shall teach again another kind of knowledge, it is the best of all kinds of knowledge, and knowing it all the sages have attained a state of perfection transcending this world.*

I shall teach again another kind of knowledge<sup>697</sup> which is different from what has been taught earlier, in which are nevertheless

<sup>696</sup> Vide *G S* 18. Two further points are mentioned there—the agency of the *guṇas* and Lord being the ultimate cause for the attainment of the three goals of supramundane glory, self-abidance and God-attainment. Of these the first has already been taught earlier, and the second comes in only for incidental treatment in the chapter. That is why, *T C* suggests, they are not included in the very brief outline of the chapter here given by Śrī Rāmānuja.

<sup>697</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara interprets 'param' as dealing with the Supreme Being. *T. C.* points out that what is taught is an expansion of earlier teaching. So in one sense it is different, while in another it is a repetition of what has already been taught.

included the *prakṛti* and the self, and which is about the *satvas* and other *guṇas*. And this knowledge is the best of all kinds of knowledge relating to the *prakṛti* and the self, knowing which knowledge, all the sages, that is, those excelling in meditation thereon, have attained a state of perfection transcending this world, the world of *samsāra*, and which is of the form of attainment of the essential nature of the self in its state of purity.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) further describes this knowledge with reference to its fruits

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।

सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ २ ॥

2 Those who, resorting to this knowledge, attain to the possession of qualities that characterise Me, are not born even at the time of creation nor hurt at the time of dissolution

Those who, resorting to this knowledge which will be described hereafter, attain to the possession of qualities that characterise Me, that is, attain similarity with Me,<sup>698</sup> are not born even at the time of creation That is, they do not become the object of the act of creation And they are not hurt at the time of dissolution, that is, do not become subject to the act of destruction of the universe

Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), in order to teach the way in which the *guṇas* of the *prakṛti* form the cause of bondage, states that the entire totality of embodied creatures being born from the association of the *prakṛti* and the self, as set out in the statement, "Whenever any (creature) is born" (XIII 26), is brought about by the Lord Himself

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।

सर्ववत्सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ ३ ॥

698. 'Sādharmya' is rendered by Śrī Śaṅkara as identity and not as community of characteristics He says that the *Giṣṭ* does not anywhere countenance any difference between the *Upadēśas* and *Īśvara*.

3. *The womb (from which the universe is born) is the great brahman (or the prakṛti) which belongs to Me. In it I cast the seed. The birth of all embodied beings, O Arjuna (Bhārata), proceeds from that (association)*

That great *brahman* which forms the womb (for the whole universe to come out from) and which belongs to Me—in it I cast the seed. Here the non-intelligent *prakṛti*, described in the passage, “Earth, water, fire, ether, *manas*, *buddhi* (or the principle called *mahat*), and also *aśankāra* (or the principle of egoity)—this *prakṛti*, thus divided into eight principles,<sup>699</sup> is Mine”, (VII 4-5), is called the great *brahman* because of its being the cause of modifications like the *mahat*, the *aśankāra* and others. In the *Vedas* also, here and there, even the *prakṛti* is denoted as ‘*brahman*’, as in “He who understands all (in essence) and knows all (in their modes and manifestations) and whose austerity consists of knowledge (i.e., the effort of thinking and willing)—from Him proceeds this *brahman* (or undifferentiated creation), as also *anna* (or the world or matter and selves) characterised by name and form” (*Mund. Up.* I. 19.)

That higher *prakṛti* consisting of the multitude of intelligent selves, which have been described in the passage, “But know that which is other than this lower one and which is life-constituting to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me” (VII 5)—that (higher *prakṛti*) is here indicated by the word, ‘*garbha*’ (foetus or that which impregnates), as being the seed of all that lives<sup>700</sup>. In that great *brahman* which is non-intelligent and which forms the womb, I cast the seed, consisting of the multitude of (all) selves. The meaning is that, with the non-intelligent *prakṛti* which consists of the multitude of different kinds of experiencers. From that, out of that union between the two *prakṛtis*, which is brought about by My will, arises the birth of all embodied beings, from Brahṁā to a clump of grass.

699 Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva also take ‘*mahat brahman*’ here to mean the *prakṛti*. T. C. points out that the use of the word, ‘*brahman*’, in this sense is justified because of the *prakṛti* being infinite as well as the material cause of the universe.

700. ‘*Garbha*’ is explained by Śrī Śaṅkara as the seed for the birth of Hiraṇyagarbha.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to say "The union of the intelligent and non-intelligent *prakṛti* in the condition of effect also is brought about only by Myself."<sup>701</sup>

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयस्समवन्ति याः ।

तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ ४ ॥

4. In all species (of creatures), O Arjuna (Kaunteya), whatever living forms spring up, the *prakṛti* is their great womb and I am the seed-giving father

In all species of creatures, such as those of the gods, the Gandharvas, the Yakṣas, the Rākṣasas, men, domestic animals, wild beasts, birds, reptiles and others, whatever living forms of the respective creatures are produced, that is, are born, the *brahman* is the great womb (from which they have issued forth), that is, the cause. The meaning is that the *prakṛti*, whose first stage (in evolution) is the *māhāt* and whose last stage is the five elements, and with which the multitude of intelligent selves has been united by Me, is the cause. I am the seed-giving father. The meaning is that I am the agent for uniting the multitude of intelligent selves in accordance with their respective *karmas*, with each of these (types of bodies)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches the cause of the birth again and again, as gods and others, of those, who in this manner were born at the beginning of creation in the species of gods and others by reason of association with the *prakṛti* on account of ancient *karmas*

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भाः ।

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ ५ ॥

5 *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are the *gunas* which spring from the *prakṛti*. They bind in the body, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), the body-owning self, which (in essence) is immutable

*Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are the three *gunas* of the *prakṛti* arising from its essential nature and are particular manifestations of its

701. Stanza 3 sets out the control exercised by the Lord over creation after great dissolutions and occasional, partial dissolutions. Now the creative activity going on every day and every moment in the Universe is shown as taking place in accordance with the will of the Lord (T. C.).

traits.<sup>702</sup> They are to be ascertained only through such (of their) effects as (mental) illumination. They are not apparent in the causal state, but are apparent in the modifications beginning with the *maṇat*. They bind this body-owing self, which is associated with bodies such as those of gods, men, and others made up of the modifications of the *prakṛti* beginning with the *maṇat* and ending with the elements, which is immutable, that is, which is not in itself liable for association with the *guṇas*; and which resides in the body. The meaning is that they bind it through the adventitious condition of its residing in the body.<sup>703</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks of the distinguishing characteristics of the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas* and their modes of binding (the self)

तत्र सत्त्व निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।

सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥ ६ ॥

6 Of these the *sattva* which is illuminating and not unwholesome, because of its freedom from impurity, binds, O sinless one, through attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge.

702. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are conceived in the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta as respectively the constituent elements and attributes of the *prakṛti* or material Nature. *Sattva* makes for a steady and balanced condition of matter. *Rajas* stimulates energetic and constructive activity. *Tamas* is responsible for inertia and disintegration. It is thought that the universe has evolved from undifferentiated primordial matter through the interplay of the *guṇas*. Owing to a belief in a close correspondence between physical constitution and moral temperament, it is also thought that the three *guṇas* stand for distinctive moral attributes. And it is these moral traits that Śrī Kṛṣṇa now proceeds to discuss. Thus, though the *guṇas* are material, they have psychological and moral aspects and effects. To quote Professor M. Rangacharya: "In Sanskrit metaphysics, the concept of matter is given a more extended significance than is warranted by our common usage. It is held that the field of matter includes much that we are apt to look on as psychological. In fact, experience in this world is conceived to be due largely to the association of the soul with matter, and hence much of our thinking and feeling in this life is held to be material" (*L G III*, p. 100).

According to Śrī Śaṅkara, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are called *guṇas*, not because they are qualities or attributes, but because the Sāṅkhyas have chosen that particular word as a technical term to indicate them. He also adds that the individual self is seemingly bound by these *guṇas*, and that on this basis the one *Ātman* is said to be bound.

703. *T. C.* points out that this is in reply to Śrī Śaṅkara's view that the *guṇas* merely seem to bind. The immutability of the self here has special reference to its being free from loss of knowledge on account of its association with the *prakṛti*.



Of these, that is, of the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas*, the essential nature of the *sattva* is such (as follows). Because of its freedom from impurity, it is illuminating. Freedom from impurity is the state of being free of qualities which stand in the way of illumination and happiness. Therefore, the meaning is that it forms the cause of illumination and happiness on account of its nature being directed solely to the production of illumination and happiness.<sup>704</sup> Illumination is knowledge of truth about a thing. Not being unwholesome where the effect known as disease is not present, that is not unwholesome. The meaning is that it is the cause of the state of being free from disease.<sup>705</sup>

This *guna*, known as the *sattva*, binds this self through attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge. And when attachment to knowledge and happiness arises, one engages oneself in secular<sup>706</sup> and scriptural expedients therefor. As a result of this, one is born in such bodies as form the means for experiencing their fruits. In this way, the *sattva* binds the self by means of attachment to happiness<sup>707</sup> and knowledge. What is said amounts to this: that the *sattva* is that by which there is the production of knowledge and happiness as well as the production again of attachment thereto.<sup>708</sup>

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवं ।

तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ ७ ॥

7 Know, O Arjuna (Kaunteya), the *rajas* to be of the nature of sexual desire and the source of sensuality and attachment. It binds the embodied self by attachment to work.

704. The nature of the *sattva* is to produce illumination, and hence the *sattva* is the cause of illumination. T. C. suggests that, when erroneous knowledge is produced by the *rajas* or the *tamas*, the real basis of such knowledge is produced by the *sattva* in subordinate association with either of them.

705 Compare Īvarakṛṣṇa's description in the *Sāṅkhyabhāṣā* (12): "Sattva is light, illuminating and desirable."

706 'Secular' (*laukika*) may mean what is enjoined in the *Smṛtis* or what is prohibited in the scriptures.

707. The happiness mentioned here is that which results from the acquisition of knowledge.

708. Śrī Saṅkara explains that the *sattva*, by leading to knowledge and happiness, makes one think that one is happy or has knowledge. This is the superimposition on the Self of an experience belonging to the world of *māyā*, and it gives rise to attachment, which in turn makes for further births in *samsāra*.

The *rajas* is of the nature of sexual desire, that is, it forms the cause of sexual desire. Sexual desire (*rāga*) is the eager longing between a man and a woman for each other. It (i.e., the *rajas*) is the source of sensuality and attachment, that is, is the place of origin of sensuality and attachment. The meaning is that it forms the cause of sensuality and attachment. Sensuality (*trāṇā*) is the longing for all objects of senses such as sound. Attachment (*saṅga*) is the longing for constant association with those connected with one, like sons and friends.<sup>709</sup>

Accordingly, it (i.e., the *rajas*) binds the embodied self by means of the production of an eager longing for *karmas*, that is, for activity. For whatever activities are undertaken by the embodied self out of eager longing for those activities, they become the cause—as they are of the nature of spiritual merit and sin (i.e., *punya* and *pāpa*)—for birth in bodies that form the means for experiencing their results. Hence the *rajas* binds the embodied self by means of attachment to work.<sup>710</sup> What is said amounts to this—that, because of this (i.e., because of sexual desire and such other things leading ultimately to bondage), the *rajas* is, in this way (i.e., so as to distinguish it from the *saṭta* and the *tamas*), the cause of sexual desire, sensuality and attachment (to friends and relatives), and the cause of attachment to work (and thereby of bondage for the self).<sup>711</sup>

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।

प्रमादालस्यनिद्रामिस्त्रिबन्धातिं भारत ॥ ८ ॥

8 But know the *tamas* to be caused by ignorance and to cause delusion to all embodied selves. It binds, O Arjuna (*Bhārata*), by heedlessness, sloth and sleep.

By 'ignorance' (*ajñāna*) is here indicated what is other than knowledge (*jñāna*). Knowledge is understanding the truth about

709 Śrī Śaṅkara splits up '*trāṇasaṅga*' into *trāṇā*, desire for what one does not have, and *saṅga*, loving contact with what one has.

710. Īśvarakṛpā describes the *rajas* as stimulating and active. Vide the note under previous verse.

711. The *rajas*, explains T. C., concentrates attention on the activity which is the means for the attainment of happiness rather than on the objective of happiness itself. Thus it induces a great deal of activity for attaining a little happiness.

a thing. What is other than this is knowledge contrary thereto. And the *tamas* is born from knowledge relating to what is the opposite of the truth about a thing <sup>712</sup>. It causes delusion to all embodied selves. Delusion is perverse knowledge. The meaning is that it (i.e., the *tamas*) is the cause of perverse knowledge. It, that is, the *tamas*, because of its being the cause of heedlessness, sloth and sleep, by means of them, binds the embodied self <sup>713</sup>.

Heedlessness is the lack of attention which gives rise to doing what is other than the work that should be done <sup>714</sup>. Sloth is the tendency not to engage in actions, it is even stupor. Sleep is the cessation of the activity of all the senses of a person by reason of exhaustion from the outgoing activity of the senses. In regard to this (sleep), the dream state is the cessation of the outgoing activity of the external sense organs, while deep, dreamless sleep is the cessation of the activity of even the internal organ of sense.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes the most important among those which constitute the means of bondage by the *sattva* and other *gunas*.

सत्त्व सुखे सजयति रज कर्मणि भारत ।

ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत ॥ ९ ॥

9. The *sattva* causes attachment to happiness, O Arjuna (*Bhārata*), (and) the *rajas* to action. But the *tamas*, screening off knowledge, causes attachment, indeed, to heedlessness.

The *sattva* has attachment to happiness for its main effect, the *rajas* has for its main effect attachment to work. But the *tamas*, screening off the knowledge of the truth about things, and being the cause of perverse knowledge, has for its main effect attachment to activities which are the very reverse of that which should be done.

712. Delusion (or *moha*) is to be understood as erroneous knowledge relating to the essential nature of a thing. Under XVIII. 32, T. C. explains the difference between the kinds of erroneous knowledge brought about by the *rajas* and the *tamas*.

713. In the *Sāṅkhyakārikā* (13) it is declared that the *tamas* is heavy and screening.

714. Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'pramāda' to mean failure to perform duties.

It may be asked thus. The *sattva* and the other *gunas* arise from the essential nature of the *prakṛti* which has evolved into the form of the body. On account of their arising from the essential nature (of the *prakṛti*), they are present at all times (in every embodiment) How then can they cause effects which are contrary to one another? To this, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) answers

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्व भवति भारत ।

रजस्सत्त्व तमश्चैव तमस्सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥ १० ॥

10 Subduing the *rajas* and the *tamas*, the *sattva* becomes preponderant, O Arjuna (Pārtha)! And (subduing) the *rajas* and the *sattva*, the *tamas* becomes preponderant And likewise, (subduing) the *tamas* and the *sattva*, the *rajas* becomes preponderant

Even though the three (*gunas*) consisting of the *sattva* and the others, arise from the essential nature of the self when in association with the *prakṛti*,<sup>715</sup> yet, on account of the power of old *karma* and on account of the differences in the food constituting nourishment to the body, the *sattva* and the other *gunas* remain in states of mutual dominance and subservience Sometimes the *sattva* remains preponderant, subduing the *rajas* and the *tamas* Similarly, the *rajas* sometimes (remains predominant), subduing the *tamas* and the *sattva* And sometimes the *tamas* (remains predominant), subduing the *rajas* and the *sattva*

And He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches that this (i.e., the predominance of one or other *guṇa*) is to be made out from the perception of the effects (of such predominance)

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्यात् बिबुध सत्त्वमित्युत ॥ ११ ॥

11 When in all the gateways (of perception), knowledge rises in regard to illumination (of the real nature of things), then one should know that in this body the *sattva* has increased abundantly

715. The *gunas*, being qualities of the *prakṛti*, are in *aprthak-siddha* relation with it: the *prakṛti* in the form of the body is in turn in such relationship with the self In this way, the *sattva* and other *gunas* may be linked up with the essential nature of the self

When in all the gateways, that is, in the organs of perception like the eyes and others, knowledge arises in regard to illumination about the truth about things,<sup>716</sup> then in that body one should know that the *rajas* has well increased.

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमस्पर्धा ।

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥ १२ ॥

12 Covetousness, (purposeless) activity, undertaking of work, lack of repose, longing—these arise, O Arjuna (Bharatarṣabha), when the *rajas* has increased abundantly

Covetousness is the disposition to refuse to part with one's own property 'Activity' (here) means 'the tendency to be active even without aiming at any purpose' Undertaking of works refers to the undertaking of works which constitute the means for bringing about (desired) results Lack of repose is the senses never ceasing to be active. Longing is desire for the objects of the senses These arise when the *rajas* has well increased The meaning is that whenever covetousness and such qualities are present, then one should know that the *rajas* has well increased

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।

तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥ १३ ॥

13 Want of illumination, inactivity, heedlessness, and even delusion also—these arise, O Arjuna (Kurunandana), when the *tamas* has abundantly increased

Want of illumination is the absence of the rise of knowledge Inactivity is stupor. Heedlessness is the carelessness which results in doing what should not be done<sup>717</sup> Delusion is perverse knowledge These arise when the *tamas* has well increased One should know with the help of these that the *tamas* has well increased

716. Śrī Rāmānuja splits up 'prakāśa upajāyate' in the verse into 'prakāśe upajāyate', while Śrī Saṅkara has 'prakāśa upajāyate', taking 'prakāśa' to be in the nominative case and in apposition with 'jñānam' in the second line

717. 'Aprakāśa' is want of knowledge in general: a particular case of such lack when knowledge is badly needed is 'pramāda'. This stanza refers back to stanza 8 (T C).

यदा सत्त्वे प्रबुद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।

तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥ १४ ॥

14 However, if the embodied self meets with dissolution when the *sattva* is dominant, then it reaches the stainless groups of those who know the highest

When the *sattva* has become dominant, then while the *sattva* continues to be dominant, if the embodied self meets with dissolution, that is, with death, it reaches the stainless *lokas*<sup>718</sup> of those who know the highest, that is, it attains the groups of those who know the truth about the self and who are free from ignorance. What is said amounts to this. One who has died when the *sattva* is dominant is born in the families of those who know the self and becomes qualified for performing those auspicious works which are the means for attaining the knowledge of the truth about the self

रजसि प्रलय गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।

15 Meeting with dissolution during (the dominance of) the *rajas*, one is born among those attached to work

Meeting with death when the *rajas* is dominant, one is born in the families of those who perform work for the sake of its fruits. The meaning is that, being born in such families, he becomes qualified for the performance of works which are the means for achieving *Svarga* and such other fruits

तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥ १५ ॥

15.. Likewise, one who has met with dissolution during (the dominance of) the *tamas*, is born in the wombs of creatures deficient in intelligence

Likewise, one who has died when the *tamas* is dominant is born in the wombs of creatures deficient in intelligence, that is, in the wombs of dogs, pigs etc. The meaning is that he is born as one unfit for striving for all the ends of human life

718. Śrī Śaṅkara interprets "attains the worlds of those who know the *maheś* and other principles".

कर्मणस्सुकृतस्याहुस्सात्त्विकं निरमलं फलम् ।

रजसस्तु फल दुःखमज्ञान तमस फलम् ॥ १६ ॥

16 The fruit, they say, of action which is excellent, is pure and of the nature of the *sattva*. But the fruit of the *rajas* is misery, and the fruit of the *tamas* is ignorance.

Thus, the fruit of work which is excellent, that is, free from attachment to results and is of the form of My worship, and which is performed by one who, after having met with death during the dominance of the *sattva*, is born again in the family of those who know the self, is that which is produced by even more *sattva* than this, and it becomes pure, that is, free from even the slightest trace of misery. So say those who know the evolution of the *sattva-guna*.

But the fruit of the *rajas* which has increased at the time of death is for the most part the misery pertaining to the state of *samsāra* (such misery) consisting of the series made up of birth in a family, attached to works which are the means for (desired) results, the undertaking of works aiming at the results (thereof), birth again, increase of the *rajas*, and the undertaking of works aiming at the results (thereof). So say those who know the truth about this *guna*.

Ignorance is the fruit of the *tamas*. That is, the fruit of the *tamas*, which has thus increased at the time of death, is a series of states of ignorance.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to answer the question, "What are the fruits like purity etc., produced from the *sattva* and other *gunas* increased from that (i.e., their initial state)?"

सत्त्वात्सजायते ज्ञान रजसो लोभ एव च ।

प्रमादमोही तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ १७ ॥

17 From the *sattva*, knowledge is born, and covetousness, indeed, from the *rajas*. Heedlessness and delusion spring from the *tamas*, as also, indeed, ignorance.

From the extra *sattva* generated through the series (of experiences mentioned) in this manner, the knowledge which is in the form of the direct realisation of the self arises. From the *rajas* similarly increased,

there springs covetousness for *Svarga* and such other fruits. From the *tamas* similarly increased, there is heedlessness, that is, indulgence in evil deeds through heedlessness; and then from this, delusion, that is, knowledge which is the opposite (of truth), and thence still more additional *tamas*, and thence again ignorance, that is, absence of knowledge

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्या मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसा. ।

जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ १८ ॥

18 Those who remain in the *sattva* go up, those characterised by the *rajas* stay in the middle, and those characterised by the *tamas*, adhering to the activities of this vilest quality, go down.

Those who remain in the *sattva* go up thus, in the manner described above, that is, they attain freedom step by step from the bonds of *samsāra*. As the *rajas* is productive of covetousness for *Svarga* and such other fruits, those characterised by the *rajas* carry out works which are the means for achieving such fruits. They when experience those fruits they are again born (in this world) and carry out the very same works. Thus, they stay in the middle. This (series of experiences) is indeed misery for the most part, as it is marked by recurring births.

Those characterised by the *tamas* adhere to the activities of the vilest quality.<sup>719</sup> that is, they adhere to the qualities of the *tamoguna*, which become increasingly vile. The meaning is that they attain (in order) the lowest condition (among human beings), then the state of animals, then birth as worms, insects etc., then the state of immovable things, and even there the state of shrubs and creepers, and finally the states of stones, dried up wood, clod, straw and such things.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now speaks about the way in which those in whom the *sattva* has increased in a series of stages through particular kind of food and particular good deeds done without desire for fruits go upward by transcending the *guṇas*.

नान्य गुणेभ्यः कर्ता यदा द्रष्टाऽनुपश्यति ।

गुणेभ्यश्च पर वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥ १९ ॥

719. In 'yoghaṇya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā', Śrī Śaṅkara reads 'vṛtti' for 'vṛth'.



19. *When the man of true vision perceives no agent of action other than the guṇas and also knows what is other than the guṇas, then he attains to My state*

When this man of true vision, after completely subduing the *rajas* and the *tamas* and abiding in the increased *sattva* through the use of *sāttvika* food and the performance of actions which do not aim at fruits and are of the form of worship of the Lord, sees no other agent of action than the *guṇas*, that is, perceives that the *guṇas* alone are the agents in all activities natural to them when he also knows what is other than the *guṇas*, knows what is other than the *guṇas* who are agents, namely, the self which is other and not an agent—then he attains to My state, that is, attains to that state (of being sinless, all-knowing and so on) which is Mine

What is said amounts to this The self which is by itself pure in nature, acquires agency in respect of various actions through association with the *guṇas*, arising from the continued flow of previous *karmas* When one sees the self thus, that the self by itself is no agent and is made up only of unlimited knowledge, then he attains to My state

It has been stated that one attains to the state of the Lord by seeing the self as a non-doer and as other than the *guṇas* which are the agents Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes of what kind this state of the Lord is

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन् देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।

जन्ममृत्युजरादु खैविमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ २० ॥

20. *Transcending these three guṇas which are manifest in the body, the embodied self, freed from birth, death, senility and sorrow, enjoys that which is immortal.*

This embodied soul, transcending these three *guṇas*, the *sattva* and others, which are manifest in the body,<sup>720</sup> that is, manifest in the *prakṛti* that has evolved into the form of the body, sees the self as different from them and as of the form solely of knowledge Freed

720. Śrī Śaṅkara interprets, 'which form the seed for the production of the body'

from birth, death, senility and sorrow,<sup>721</sup> it enjoys that which is immortal, namely, the self This is My state Such is the meaning

Arjuna now spoke, asking about the manner of conduct indicative of the essential nature of one who has transcended the *gunas* and about the way (lit. cause) leading to such transcendence

अर्जुन उवाच—

कलिङ्गक्षेत्रगुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।

किमाचार कथं चैतांस्त्रीन् गुणानतिवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

21 By what marks, O Lord does the man who has transcended these three *gunas* become (characterised)? Of what nature is his conduct? And how does he transcend these three *gunas*?

By what marks, that is, distinctive qualities, does the man who has transcended these three *gunas*, the *sattva* and others, become characterised?<sup>722</sup> Of what nature is his conduct? That is, with what kind of conduct is he associated? The meaning is of what kind is the conduct which serves as an indicative mark for understanding his essential nature? How, by what expedient, does he transcend the three *gunas*, the *sattva* and others?

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

प्रकाश च प्रवृत्ति च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।

न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥ २२ ॥

THE LORD SAID

22. He (who has transcended the *gunas*) does not O Arjuna (Pāṇḍava) hate illumination, activity and even delusion when they are present, nor longs for (them) when they are absent

He who does not hate the effects of the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas*, known as illumination, activity and delusion, when function-

<sup>721</sup> That is, the sorrow caused by birth, death and old age, or birth, death, old age and the sorrow that they cause (T. C.).

<sup>722</sup> 'Lagna' here is to be understood as internal qualities, and not external marks like dress, etc Cf. *Maṇu* (VI. 66) (T. C.).

ing in regard to things other than the self which are undesirable, nor desires the same things when they have stopped functioning in regard to things other than the self which are desirable <sup>723</sup>

उदासीनबदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचात्यते ।

गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योज्वतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥ २३ ॥

23 *He (is said to have transcended the gunas) who remains like one who is indifferent and is not moved by the gunas, who, thinking that the gunas indeed function (in producing their effects), stands firm and does not act (according to their promptings)*

He who remains like one indifferent, that is, through satisfaction in the vision of the self as distinct from the *gunas*, remains like one indifferent in regard to other things and is not moved by the *gunas* mediately through hatred and longing; who, realising that the *gunas* are active in producing their own effects like illumination etc., remains<sup>724</sup> still and who does not act, that is, does not exert himself in accordance with the effects of the *gunas*

समदुःखसुखस्त्वस्थस्समलोष्टाश्मकाश्चन ।

तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो बीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसस्तुति ॥ २४ ॥

मानाबमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयो ।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतस्स उच्यते ॥ २५ ॥

24 *He who is the same in grief and joy, who abides in himself, to whom a clod of earth, a stone and gold are the same who regards alike the pleasant and the unpleasant, who is intelligent who regards alike blame and praise of himself*

723. Things other than the self may be desirable or undesirable. Now, there is hatred in regard to what is undesirable and the means therefor, while there is longing for what is desirable and the means therefor. The reference here is to one who does not hate the effects of the *gunas* when they serve as the means for undesirable experiences, nor long for them when, after serving as the means for desirable experiences, they cease to be present (T C)

724. 'Aśaṅgī' is in *paraśaṁpada*, though it should be in *ātmanepada*. Śrī Saṅkara thinks that the lapse from grammar has been caused by metrical necessities. He also gives an alternative reading, 'anuśaṅgī', which is grammatically correct.

*25. Who is the same in honour and dishonour: who is equal in regard to the sides of friends and foes: who has given up all undertakings—such a person is said to have transcended the guṇas*

He who is the same in grief and joy, that is, whose mental disposition is the same towards grief and joy: who abides in himself, the meaning being, who abides in his own self on account of his own self being the sole object of his love, and whose mental disposition is the same towards joys and sorrows like those from the birth, death, etc. of sons and such others who are all distinct from it (i.e., the self),<sup>725</sup> to whom, certainly because of this, a clod of earth, a stone and gold are the same: who in consequence of this alone holds as equal the pleasant and the unpleasant, that is, who regards alike the objects of liking and dislike, who is intelligent,<sup>726</sup> that is, skilful in discriminating between the *prakṛti* and the self: who therefore indeed regards alike blame and praise of himself, that is, who is equal-minded towards praise and blame, arising from the good and the bad qualities of human and such other states of existence, regarded as pertaining to the self, by bearing in mind their lack of connection with himself.

Who is equal-minded towards the honour and dishonour arising from it (i.e., such misapprehension of the body as the self) and towards the sides of friends and enemies arising therefrom, on account of the absence of any connection between these and himself, and who has accordingly given up all undertakings arising from his embodied existence—he who is like this, he is said to have transcended the *guṇas*

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) mentions the principal cause in such transcendence

मा च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।

स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ २६ ॥

*26. And he who serves Me with the discipline of devotion which is unwavering, transcends these guṇas and becomes fitted for the state of the brahman (or the self in its purity).*

725 The point here is that devotion to the essential nature of the self makes for many kinds of 'equal-mindedness' (T. C.).

726 Both Śrī Saṅkara and Śrī Rāmāṇja understand 'dīna' here in the sense of 'one who is intelligent'

Transcendence over the *gunas* is not effected by mere meditation on the distinction between the *prakṛti* and the self as taught in such passages as "When the man of true vision perceives no agent of action other than the *gunas*" (XIV 19) For it is liable to be obstructed by unconscious subtle impressions, which are hostile thereto and which have continued from time without beginning. He who with the discipline of devotion which is unswerving, that is, is directed to a single object, serves Me, whose will is unfailingly true, who am supremely compassionate, who am an ocean of parental love for those that seek refuge—such a person transcends the *saṁsāra* and other *gunas* which are difficult to transcend. He becomes fit for *brahmabhūya*,<sup>727</sup> the state of the *brahman*. That is, he becomes qualified for (realising) the condition of the *brahman*. The meaning is that he attains the immortal and immutable self as it is in itself.

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥ २७ ॥

27 For I am the basic support of the individual self which (in its pure state) is immortal and immutable, as also of everlasting power and glory (or *dharma*), and of perfect bliss.

The word, 'hi' (rendered as 'for'), is indicative of cause. Because I, when served by the discipline of devotion which is unswerving, am the basic support<sup>728</sup> of the individual self<sup>729</sup> which is immortal and immutable, as also everlasting *dharma*, that is, of superb power and glory, and also of perfect bliss, that is to say, of the bliss which can be attained by the man of wisdom described in such passages as "Hold-

727 For Śrī Śaṅkara this is the state of *mokṣa* when the individual self is realised to be identical with the *Brahman*. Śrī Madhva takes it to be a state where the individual self will be as dear to the Lord as the *prakṛti* (or *Lakṣmī*).

728 'Pratiṣṭhā' in the verse may mean a support which also controls. Or it may stand for the ultimate cause where all enquiry about the means for realising the self in its essential nature finds its rest (T. C.)

729 'Brahman', according to Śrī Śaṅkara, is the Absolute who is 'in' the individual self. Or the identity between the Absolute and the Lord may be suggested here, as there exists between them only the distinction between energy and its possessor. The unconditioned *Brahman* may be regarded as the support of the conditioned *Brahman*. Śrī Madhva renders 'brahman' as 'māyā', that is, the *prakṛti* or *Lakṣmī*.

ing that Vāsudeva is everything" (VII 19)—(because of all this one who serves Me with the discipline of devotion transcends the *gunas*)

Though the phrase, 'everlasting *dharma*', is denotative of that (conduct or activity) which leads to attainment, yet because what follows and what precedes (it) are indicative of goals of attainment, this (phrase), too, being placed among them, denotes an attainable goal.

What is said amounts to this. Earlier, in the passage beginning with, "For this *māyā* of Mine made of the three *gunas* for purposes of play, is difficult to transcend. Those who seek refuge with Me entirely (—they cross beyond this *māyā*)" (VII 14) it has been taught that seeking refuge with the Lord is the only means for the transcendence over the *gunas* and the attainment therefrom of *kauvalya*, supra-mundane glory and union with the Lord. Therefore, the sole means for transcendence over the *gunas* and for the condition of the *brahman* (attainable) therefrom is seeking refuge with the Lord with singleness of purpose.<sup>730</sup>

730 *Prapatti*, as a part of *bhakti-yoga*, is taught here

## CHAPTER XV

In the chapter relating to the *kṣetra* (i.e., the XIII chapter), it has been stated, after a thorough examination of the nature of the *prakṛti* and of the self, that the association of the self which is exceedingly pure and constituted solely of unlimited knowledge, with the *prakṛti*, which has evolved into the forms of goods etc., causes the flow of attachment to the *gunas* of the *prakṛti* and is without beginning. In the next chapter, it was stated that the association of the self with the *prakṛti* in its two states as effect and cause has for its roots attachment to the *gunas* and is brought about by the Lord Himself. Then the ways of attachment to the *gunas* were described in detail. Finally it was taught that the realisation of the true nature of the self preceded by the removal of attachment to the *gunas*, has its roots in devotion to the Lord.

Now (in the present chapter) He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak about the adorable Lord exercising sovereign control over the destructible and the indestructible entities consisting of the bound and the free (souls) and to teach that the Lord is the Supreme Person, as, by reason of supreme greatness because of His being the opposite of all that is evil and His remaining as the sole seat of auspicious qualities. He is of a different kind from both the destructible and indestructible kinds of souls which form the subjects of His sovereign control <sup>731</sup>

There, in order to speak of that object of (His) sovereign rule which is known as the indestructible (*akṣara*), and the bondage of which has been cut off by the weapon in the form of non-attachment, the Lord describes the image of an *asvattha* tree to represent the particular modification of non-intelligent matter which has spread itself in the form of the bondage to be cut off.

**धीमगवानुवाच—**

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधश्चाखमधत्थ प्राहुरव्ययम् ।

छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥ १ ॥

## THE LORD SAID :

1 They (i.e., the Vedas) speak of an indestructible *āvatīṭha* tree which has its roots upwards and branches downwards and whose leaves are the Vedas. He who knows it knows the Vedas.

The *āvatīṭha* tree which is called *samsāra*, which has its roots upwards and branches downwards and which is indestructible—the Vedas speak of (it) in such passages as the following. "This *āvatīṭha* tree which has its roots upwards and branches downwards is eternal" (*Kaṭh. Up* VI 1), and "He who knows now the tree which has its roots upwards and branches downwards" (*Taitt. Ar* I. 11. 5).<sup>732</sup> It has its roots upwards because it has its source in the fourfaced (Brahmā) who is placed above the seven worlds.<sup>733</sup> It has branches downwards because it ends with those dwelling on the earth and consisting of all men, domestic animals, wild beasts, worms, insects, birds and immovable things.<sup>734</sup> It is indestructible, because it cannot be cut, being of the nature of a flowing stream—prior to the rise of the correct knowledge which gives rise to non-attachment.

Of which *āvatīṭha* tree, they declare the Vedas to be the leaves. The Vedas are the leaves because this tree of *samsāra* grows with the help of rites for the fulfilment of desires such as are taught in passages of the Vedas<sup>735</sup> like "He who desires wealth should sacrifice a white (animal) to Vāyu" (*Taitt. Sam.* II 1 1) and "Let him who wants to have children offer a sacrifice with eleven cups (of rice-cakes) to Indra and Agni" (*Ibid* II 2. 1). The tree indeed grows with the help of the leaves.

He who knows the *āvatīṭha* of such a description<sup>736</sup> knows the Vedas. The Veda indeed describes the means for cutting off this tree of *samsāra*. He (who knows this tree) is spoken of as the knower of the Vedas.

732 The unquoted second line completes the sentence thus "—that man will never believe, I shall be killed by Death."

733. Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'rdhva' to be the Brahman possessing the unmanifested power of *māyā*. It means 'Viṣṇu' to Śrī Madhva.

734. The *makai*, the *śaśkhāra* and the *tanmātras* are like its branches below, says Śrī Śaṅkara.

735. As in II 42, here too by the Vedas is meant the ritualistic portion dealing with rites for the fulfilment of desires.

736. Śrī Śaṅkara cites a passage from the *Nāradaopaniṣad* (16), describing a similar tree. Compare also *M. B.* (XIV. 35).



because knowledge about the essential nature of the tree to be cut off is helpful to knowledge about the means of cutting (the tree).

अधोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रबुद्धा विषयप्रबालाः ।

अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥ २ ॥

2 Above and below are spread the branches nourished by the *gunas* (of the *prakṛti*) and with sense-objects for their tender shoots, and downward indeed to mankind extend the roots that consist of the effects of action which bind

Moreover, other downward branches of that tree having men and such other embodied beings as branches are produced by the effects of the respective actions of each of these beings and again become spread out above as Gandharvas, Yakṣas, the gods and such others. These are nourished by the *gunas*, that is, nourished by the *sattva* and other *gunas*. They have the sense-objects for their tender shoots, that is, have for their sprouts sound and other objects of the senses.<sup>737</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains how this is so. The (secondary) roots<sup>738</sup> of this tree which has its (principal) roots in the world of Brahman and its crest in men, extend down below, that is, in the world which is mankind. And they are the effects of actions which cause bondage. The meaning is that the effects of actions which cause bondage become roots in the world which is mankind. For by the effects of actions performed in the human condition there come into existence men, beasts and other beings down below, and gods and others up above.

न रूपमस्येह तद्योपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च सप्रतिष्ठा ।

3. Its form is not here comprehended in this manner, nor its end, nor yet its beginning, nor again its support

This form of this tree in the way in which it has been described—as having its roots above because of the four-faced Brahman being its

737 In the previous verse, *nammitaka-śṛṅga* has been described now *śṛṅga-śṛṅga* is dealt with in this stanza (T C)

738. These have been compared to "the dependant roots" of the banyan tree, "growing from the branches and spreading down to the ground" (L. G III, p 107). See also T C

source, as having its branches below because of men being its crest through uninterrupted descent therefrom and as also having its branches extend upward and downward by means of the actions performed in the human condition and constituting roots-(this form of this tree) is not comprehended to be so by those in *samāhāra*<sup>739</sup> Only this much is comprehended "I am a man, the son of Devadatta, the father of Yajñadatta and possessing property in accordance therewith." Similarly, the end of the tree, that is, its destruction, is not comprehended as being caused by non-attachment to the enjoyable things (lit. enjoyments) consisting of the *guṇas*. It is not comprehended that similarly attachment to the *guṇas* is alone the origin of this (tree). It is also not comprehended that the support<sup>740</sup> of this tree is the ignorance which is of the form of esteeming as the self what is not the self. Ignorance alone is the support of this tree, because in it alone it (i.e., the tree) rests<sup>741</sup>

अश्वत्थमेन सुविरूढमूलमसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्वा ॥ ३ ॥

ततः पदं तत्परिमाणितव्यं यस्मिन् गता न निवर्तन्ति भूय ।

3 Having cut down this *śvattha* tree which has well grown roots of various kinds, by means of the strong weapon of non-attachment.

4 In consequence thereof, that destination has to be sought for wherefrom those who go (there) do not again return.

Having cut down this (tree) which is as described above, which has well grown roots of various kinds, that is, the roots of which are strong and various, by means of the strong weapon called non-attachment to the enjoyable things made up of the *guṇas*, and derived from right knowledge—in consequence thereof, because there is no attachment to sense-objects, that destination wherefrom those who go

739 The idea is that such men are devoid of the knowledge needed for salvation (T C).

740. Śrī Śaṅkara takes '*sampratīṣṭha*' to mean the intermediate state between origin and destruction. T C criticises an interpretation of the word as standing for the *Paramātmā* here. The followers of Śrī Madhva read '*sampraviṣṭa*'.

741. The support of the tree is the place where the roots rest. The roots have been identified with *karma*, which arises from ignorance, which in turn is due to egoism (T C).

(there) do not return again<sup>742</sup> has to be sought, that is, looked for so that it may be discovered

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches how attachment to enjoyable things made of the *guṇas* and the perverse knowledge which is its cause come to an end

तमेव चाद्य पुरुष प्रपद्येत प्रवृत्तिं प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ ४ ॥

4 One should seek refuge with that Primal Person from whom this ancient process (of attachment to the *guṇas*) emanated

In order that ignorance and such other things (like delusion and attachment) may come to an end, one should seek refuge (*prapadyet*) with that Primal Person alone. That is, one should seek refuge (*prapadyeta*)<sup>743</sup> with Him who is primal, that is, who is the beginning of all things, as described in the following and other passages. "With Me as the witnessing overlord, the *prakṛti* gives birth to the world with (all its) movable and immovable beings" (IX 10), "I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me" (X 8), and "(Thus) other than Myself, there is nothing whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (Dhanarjaya)" (VII 7) and from whom, the Creator of all, has emanated this ancient process,<sup>744</sup> continuing from the distant past, of attachment to the enjoyable things made up of the *guṇas*. This has indeed been stated by Me even earlier. "For this *māyā* of Mine, made of the (three) *guṇas* for purposes of play, is difficult to get over. Those who take refuge with Me entirely, they cross beyond this *māyā*" (VII 14)

Or the reading is '*prapadyeyataḥ pravṛttiḥ*' (for '*prapadyeyataḥ pravṛttiḥ*')<sup>745</sup> Having taken refuge with (*prapadya*),

742 The verse has '*nivartanti*', the verb being conjugated in *parasmaipada*. As this is grammatically incorrect Śrī Rāmānuja glosses the word by giving its correct *ātmanepada* form, '*nivartante*'.

743 The irregular *parasmaipada* form, '*prapadyet*', in the verse is rendered in the commentary by the correct *ātmanepada* form.

744 According to Śrī Śaṅkara, this process resembles the creation of illusions by a magician.

745 Śrī Rāmānuja reads '*prapadyet yataḥ*' and also gives the alternative, which he seems to prefer, of '*prapadyeyataḥ*', analysed into '*prapadya yataḥ*', Śrī Śaṅkara and Śrī Madhva adopt the latter reading, which they split up into '*prapadye yataḥ*'. Śrī Śaṅkara explains that the goal has to be sought for by the aspirant thus: "I seek refuge with the Primal Person". '*Prapadye*' is thus taken to be in the indicative first person singular, of which it is the regular form. Śrī Madhva says that '*prapadye*' should be regarded as an irregular form of the potential third person singular, '*prapadyeta*'.

that is, sought protection from, the Primal Person, the activity has proceeded, which forms the means for this (*syatah*), that is, for all such purposes as putting an end to ignorance, and which is ancient, continuing from the distant past

The activity of those who in the distant past yearned for salvation is ancient. The meaning is "Those in the distant past who yearned for salvation became, indeed, released from all bondage only after seeking protection from Me alone"<sup>746</sup>

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामा ।

इन्द्रैर्विमुक्तास्तुलुहलसर्गैर्गन्धन्यमूढाः पदमव्यय तत् ॥ ५ ॥

5 Those who are free from the delusion of wrong notions (about the self), by whom the evil of attachment has been subdued, who are constant in (the contemplation of) the self, who have turned away from (worldly) desires, and who are free of (the influence of) the pairs of opposites known as pleasures and pains, and who are not beguiled into error (regarding the essential nature of the self), go to that immutable destination

Those who, after having sought refuge with Me in this manner, are free from the delusion of wrong notions about the self,<sup>747</sup> that is, are free from the delusion in the form of misesteeming what is not the self as the self by whom the evil of attachment has been subdued, that is, by whom the evil known as attachment to the enjoyable things made of the *gunas*, has been subdued who are constant in the self, that is, wholly engaged in the knowledge of the self, that knowledge being *adhyātma* which is in regard to the self who have turned away from (all) desires other than this (desire for knowledge of the self) who are free of (the influence of) the pairs of opposites known as pleasures and pains<sup>748</sup> and who are not beguiled into error, that is, who know the natures of the self and the not-self—go to that

746. The tradition of *prapatti* from the distant past is here mentioned by the Lord (T. C.).

747. Śrī Śaṅkara renders "free from *māna* (pride) and *moha* (delusion)".

748. The reference is to things having the essential nature of being agreeable and others having the essential nature of being disagreeable. Freedom from their influence, for the striving aspirant, is putting up with them. When success is to him, he is free of all pain.

immutable destination They attain, as it really exists, the self which is essentially of the form of unlimited knowledge. The meaning is For those who seek refuge with Me, all activities (mentioned above) become easy to do and culminate in success exclusively through My grace

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।

यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परम मम ॥ ६ ॥

6 That, after attaining which they do not return (to the world of *samsāra*), is the supreme light (or the individual self in its pristine purity, and glory), belonging to (and ruled by) Me the sun does not illumine it nor the moon, nor fire

The sun does not cause that light which is the self to shine, nor the moon, nor fire For knowledge is alone what causes everything to shine (and become revealed) External lights, however, are helpful through destroying the darkness which prevents the contact between the sense (of vision) and the sense-objects But, of this (i.e. the internal light which is the self), *yoga* (or concentrated meditation) is the revealer Beginningless *karma* is the hindrance thereto It has been taught that its end is through non-attachment and other qualities which have their roots in self-surrender to the Lord That after attaining which they do not return, is the supreme *dhāman*, that is, the supreme light It is Mine it belongs to Me The meaning is that it forms a part (as an inseparable attribute) of Myself,<sup>749</sup> being what is owned by Me Its supremacy is by reason of its being the illuminator of even the sun and such other luminous bodies. The sun and such other luminous bodies, indeed, are not illuminators of the light which is knowledge (i.e., the self) Knowledge alone is the illuminator of all things

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतस्सनातनः ।

मनश्चष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ ७ ॥

749. The self and the Lord are fundamentally distinct from one another But, as the thing owned and the owner, they become a composite and qualified unity. In this unity, the self which is the qualifying attribute is separately designated as a part with reference to the principal object qualified (or the Lord) (T. O.). Compare S. B (II. 3. 45), where it is shown that the self is an *amsa* (or part) of the Lord in the sense of its being a mode which cannot exist apart from the possessor of the mode.

7. *Even while being an eternal part of Myself, it becomes the bound self in the world of (cyclic) life and draws to itself the senses of which the mind is the sixth and which are seated in the prakṛti*

That (entity) whose essential nature has been described thus (i.e., the individual self), even while being a certain eternal part of Myself,<sup>750</sup> becomes the bound individual self and remains in the world of (cyclic) life, having been encompassed by ignorance in the form of *karma* whose beginning is unknown it draws to itself the senses, of which the mind is the sixth, and which are seated in the bodies that are of gods, men and other such beings, and are particular modifications of the *prakṛti*. Something else (i.e., another part of Myself) abides in its own essential nature, freed of this ignorance, by the way already taught. But that which has become the bound individual self has its power and knowledge extremely diminished. Being the ruler over the senses of which the mind is the sixth and which are in bodies that are particular modifications of the *prakṛti* and are acquired through *karma*, it (i.e., the self) draws them hither and thither according to its *karma*.

शरीर यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वर ।

गृहीत्वैतानि सयाति वायुर्गन्धानिबाशयात् ॥ ८ ॥

8 *Whatever body the ruler (or the self) acquires and from whatever body it departs, it goes on its way, taking these (senses) (with it), as the wind (moves along, taking away) perfumes from their place*

Whatever body it acquires and from whatever body it departs, in respect of these (bodies), this ruler of the senses<sup>751</sup> goes on its way, taking (with it) these senses along with the subtle elements,<sup>752</sup>

750. Śrī Saṅkara says that the individual self is a fraction or part of the Supreme Self in the manner in which the reflected image of the sun in water is a part of the sun or the space within a jar is part of the universal ether of space. That is, the individual self is only imagined to be part of the Supreme Self. The deists' view is that the souls are called *aśāśas* 'because of their bearing some reduced similitude to the Lord'.

751. 'Īśvara' is taken by Śrī Madhva to mean the Lord.

752. Vide *S. B.* (III 1 1-3), where it is taught that the self, when leaving a body, takes with it the elements in a subtle state and the senses resting in them, and that these produce its next body. Under the last of these aphorisms, *Drk Up.* (IV. 4 2) and this verse from the *Gita* are quoted.

as the wind (moves along, taking) the perfumes from their place. The meaning is that in the manner in which the wind takes perfumes along with subtle parts from flower-garlands, sandal, musk and other sweet-smelling substances from their place, that is, from their abodes, and moves on elsewhere—in that way.

In regard to what indeed these organs of sense are, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says

श्रोत्रं चक्षुस्स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।

अचिष्ठाय मनश्चाय विषयानुपसेवते ॥ ९ ॥

9 Presiding over the ear, the eye, the sense of touch, the tongue and the nose, as also the mind, it enjoys the objects of the senses

Presiding over these organs of sense, of which the mind is the sixth, that is, rendering them fit to function in regard to their several objects, it is addicted to (*upasevate*), that is, enjoys (*upabhunkte*) those objects of senses like sound and others

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थित वाऽपि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुः ॥ १० ॥

10 The deluded do not perceive it (*i e*, the self), when in association with the *gunas*, whether it is departing or staying or experiencing. They see who have the eye of (discriminatory) knowledge.

The deluded never see<sup>753</sup> it (*i e*, the individual self) as distinct from the human and other bodies that are particular modifications of the *prakṛti* and as solely of the nature of knowledge—(it, the individual self) which is in this way associated with the *gunas*, that is, connected with the bodies which are human or other, being particular modifications of the *prakṛti*, whether it (the self) is departing from a particular body, staying in a particular body, or experiencing the objects of the senses which are made of the *gunas*. The deluded are those who wrongly regard the human and other bodies as the self. But those who have the eye of knowledge possess the knowledge about

753. Śrī Śaṅkara says that these words indicate the Lord's pity for the miserable state of the deluded.

the discrimination between the body and the self. They see this self as possessing a form distinct (from that of the body) in all conditions whatever.

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।

यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ ११ ॥

11. *Those who strive as yogins see it abiding in themselves. But, strive as they may, those with undisciplined minds, and destitute of intelligence, do not see it*

The yogins who strive in regard to *karma-yoga* and such other ways of realisation, after surrendering themselves to Me, have their internal organ of perception cleared of all stains thereby, they see with the eye called *yoga* this (self) as abiding in its own form as separate from the body, even though abiding in themselves, that is, in the body.<sup>753a</sup> But those of undisciplined minds,<sup>754</sup> that is, those by whom there has been no self-surrender to Me, whose minds are therefore uncultivated, and who are destitute of intelligence, devoid of an intelligence capable of seeing the self—they see it not, strive as they may

Thus, it has been taught that the self, both in the emancipated condition and in the condition of bondage, is owned and ruled over by the Lord—the self who is the light of knowledge and the illuminator of even luminous bodies like the sun, the moon and fire that illumine by helping the senses through destroying the universal darkness<sup>755</sup> which hinders contact of the senses with their objects. So it has been stated: "That is the supreme light belonging to (and ruled over by) Me. Even while being an eternal part of Myself, it becomes the bound individual self in the world of (cycle) life" (XV 6-7). He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches that even the light of the sun and other luminous bodies, which constitutes a particular modification of the *prakṛti*, is owned and ruled over by the Lord.

753a. 'Atmanas' has been explained by Śrī Rāmānuja as 'sarire' (in the body). Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'evamevām buddhas' (in their intellects).

754. Failure to seek refuge with the Lord constitutes the indiscipline of these minds (T. C.).

755. See Note 672



यदादित्यगत तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।

यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥ १२ ॥

*12 That light, which, being in the sun, illuminates the whole world, that in the moon and that in life, understand that light to belong to Me*

That light<sup>756</sup> of these, the sun and other luminous bodies, which illuminates the whole world, that light is Mine own Understand that it has been granted to them by Me who have been worshipped by every one of them

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) also declares "The power to support, which the earth that supports embodied beings has, belongs to Me "

गमाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

पुष्णामि चौषधीस्सर्वास्सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १३ ॥

*13 Entering the earth, I support all embodied beings by My power I nourish all plants, having become the moon, full of nectar*

Entering the earth I support all embodied beings by My power, that is, by My energy which cannot be obstructed Similarly, having become the moon, full of the essence of nectar, I nourish all plants

अह वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्राणापानसमायुक्त पचाम्यन्न चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४ ॥

*14 Having become the fire of digestion, I am associated with the bodies of (all) living creatures : united with the ingoing and outgoing breaths, I cause the digestion of the four kinds of food.*

Becoming the *vaiśvānara*,<sup>757</sup> that is, the fire of digestion, I am associated with the bodies of all living beings. United with the

<sup>756</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara suggests that this is the light of consciousness and that it is present in the sun and other luminous bodies in a noteworthy form, on account of the presence therein of a large measure of *satva*.

<sup>757</sup> The term literally means that which is common to all men. It usually refers to Agni and is particularly used of the fire of digestion, as in " the *vaiśvānara* fire is that by which the food eaten is digested " (*Bṛh. Up.* V. 9 1). T. C. quotes a stanza from a medical treatise which says that the digestive fire digests food in association with the *prāṇa*, *apāna* and *samāna*.

different functions<sup>758</sup> of the ingoing breath (*prāṇa*) and the outgoing breath (*apāna*), I cause the digestion of the four kinds of food eaten by them—consisting of what is masticated, sucked, licked and swallowed.

The moon and the fire of digestion which are owned and ruled over by the Supreme Person have been described here by means of grammatical equations with Him in the statements, "I, having become the moon", and "Having become the fire of digestion". He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now gives the reason for describing these two (i.e., the moon and the fire of digestion), as well as the entire host of embodied beings, by means of grammatical equations with the Supreme Person.

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्त. स्मृतिज्ञानिमपह्न च ।

वेदंश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥ १५ ॥

*15 And I am well established in the hearts of all From Me (come) memory, knowledge and their loss also I alone am to be known from all the Vedas. I bring into being the results of (the rituals of) the Vedas, and I alone am the knower of the Vedas*

Exercising control over everything by My will, I am well established as the Self in the hearts—that is, in the region where arises the knowledge which is at the root of all activity and cessation from activity—of the entire host of embodied beings, as of these two, the moon and the fire of digestion.

Accordingly, the scriptures declare in the following and other similar passages "He who has entered within, is the ruler of all things that are born, and is the Self of all" (*Taitt Ar* III. 21), "He who, dwelling in the earth... He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self... who controls (the self from within)" (*Mādh Brh. Up* III. 7. 3, 22); "The end pointing downwards, the heart is in the form of the calyx of a lotus" (*M. Nār. XI. 7*); and "Now (there is) that

<sup>758</sup> The vital air is supposed to have a fivefold activity in the body. The *prāṇa* maintains life, while the *apāna*, the *vyāna*, the *śukla* and the *udāna* promote excretion, circulation, digestion and respiration respectively.

small lotus-like home (i.e., the heart) which is in this city of the *Brahman* (i.e., the body)" (*Chānd Up* VIII. 1. 1).<sup>759</sup>

There are also the following and other *Smṛti* passages : " Viṣṇu is the ruler of the entire universe, He who is the universe " (*V.P* I. 17. 20) : " Him who is the ruler of all, who is infinitely small among those who are infinitely small " (*Manu* XII. 122)<sup>760</sup> and " The controller, the punishing judge, the king, He who is within your heart " (*Ibid* , VII. 92)<sup>761</sup>

On account of this (i.e., because of the Lord being the Self in the heart), the memory of all springs from Me alone Memory is knowledge which arises from experience and the impressions thereof, and which has for its contents what has been experienced formerly Knowledge is the positive conclusion about a thing with the help of the senses, inference, the scriptures and the practice of concentrated meditation This also is from Me So too is *apohana* ' *Apohana* ' means the removal of knowledge <sup>762</sup> ' *Apohana* ' may also mean ' *ūhana* ' ' *Ohana* ' is ' *ūha* ' (or 'reasoning'). *Ūha* is indeed that knowledge which helps the means of knowledge, which arises from the definition of the collection of causes and other such things, and which relates to the conditions suitable for

759 The purport of the quoted texts is to describe the Lord as having entered into all things and being their Self in order to exercise control over them (*T C*). The *M Nār*, passage goes on to declare that the Supreme Self is seated in a flame of fire in the cavity of the heart and thereby sustains and controls all the activities of life In the *Chānd Up* , we read immediately afterwards that inside the lotus-like house there is the *dakṣarādāśa* or the ' little ether ' This is then described as the Self who is devoid of sin, free from old age, death, sorrow, hunger, and thirst, whose desires become true and whose will is unfailingly realised

760. The second line of the verse runs thus " whose lustre is golden, who is to be known by the mind in a state of sleeplike trance (without the aid of the five senses), let Him be known to you as the Supreme Person ".

761. The stanza continues " if you have no quarrel with Him, you need not go to Kurukṣetra or the Ganga (to get rid of your sins) ". ' *Vaivasvata* ' has been taken to refer to the Lord in His aspect as the punishing judge Śrī Rāmānuja reads ' *rājā* ' (rendered as ' king '), but the text of *Manu* generally reads ' *deva* '.

762. According to Śrī Śaṅkara, the virtuous, on account of their good deeds, are blessed with knowledge and memory The wicked, through their sins, suffer from the loss of these.

the rise of knowledge to the effect that a certain piece of knowledge is fit to arise in a particular way.<sup>763</sup> This *śāś* is also from Me

I alone am to be known from all the *Vedas*. Because of this namely, that by reason of My being the Internal Ruler of Agni, the moon, Vāyu, the sun, Indra and other gods they have Me for their Self, hence even when they (the *Vedas*) are devoted to teaching about them (i.e., the gods), I alone am to be known from all the *Vedas*—just as the individual self alone is to be known from words like ‘gods’, ‘men’ etc

I bring into being the results of the *Vedas*<sup>764</sup> ‘*Vedānta*’ means the end, that is, the results, of *Vedic* texts (i.e., of the rituals prescribed in them), like “Offer sacrifices to Indra” and “Offer sacrifices to Varuṇa”<sup>765</sup> For all *Vedas* culminate in the (prescribed) results. He who brings into being the end is the maker of the results. The meaning is “I alone am the giver of the results spoken about in the *Vedas*.” This has been already taught in the passage commencing from, “Whichever devotee desires to worship with faith whatever manifestation (of Mine)”, and (stating), “And thence obtains the objects of his desire, they are in fact bestowed by Me alone” (VII 22) and also “Indeed, I am the enjoyer and (am) also the lord, in fact, of all sacrifices” (IX 24)

I alone am the knower of the *Vedas*. That is, the knower of the *Vedas* is also none other than Myself. I alone know the *Vedas* as speaking about Me in this manner. What is sought to be conveyed is that he who expresses the meaning of the *Vedas* in a different manner from this is not a knower of the *Vedas*.

763. The word, ‘*pramāṇa*’, appears to be used in two senses in this sentence as ‘correct knowledge’ and as ‘the instrument of knowledge’. T. C. explains ‘*śāś*’ as reasoning helpful to accurate knowledge (*pramāṇa jñāna*), which is meant by the word, ‘*jñāna*’. This is thus illustrated: it is about the fitness of accurate knowledge of form as in this way, that accurate visual knowledge is fit to arise in respect of the possessor of form, form, their fitness to be found together in the same place and other such matters connected with the eye (as an instrument of knowledge).

764. ‘*Vedāntakṛt*’, according to Śrī Śaṅkara, means the maker of the tradition in regard to the teaching of *Vedānta*, while Śrī Madhva suggests that the reference is to Vyāsa.

765. These texts might have been quoted from *Śat. Br.* (V 1 6, II 3. 37). T. C. explains that they refer to all texts prescribing sacrifices to Indra and Varuṇa, such as *Tait. Sam.* (II. 5 4 1, II 3. 13).

Hence, hear from Me alone the truth that constitutes the essence of all the *Vedas*

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरस्सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

16 *There are two kinds of souls (mentioned) in the scriptures, the destructible and the indestructible. The destructible class consists of all beings. The indestructible class is described as uniform and homogeneous*

These two kinds of souls<sup>766</sup> are well known in the scriptures as the destructible and the indestructible. Of them the class of souls indicated by the word, 'destructible', consists of all beings that are associated with the non-intelligent *prakṛti* of a changeable nature, from Brahmā to a clump of grass, who can be denoted by the expression, 'individual self' (*jīva*). Here the word, '*puruṣa*', is used in the singular (as indicative of a class) by reason of the single adventitious condition of association with non-intelligent matter.

That which is uniform and homogeneous is indicated by the expression, 'the indestructible'. This is the free soul, which is free from association with non-intelligent matter and which remains in its own nature. And it is described as uniform and homogeneous (*kūṭastha*), because, in the absence of association with non-intelligent matter, it cannot become exclusively related to particular modifications of non-intelligent matter like the bodies of Brahmā etc. Here again description in the singular (as indicative of a class) is determined by the single adventitious condition of dissociation from non-intelligent matter. It is not that before this, in the course of beginningless time, only one soul became free. As it has been declared, "Many, purified by the austerity of knowledge, have obtained My state" (IV 10) and, "They are not born even at the time of creation, nor hurt at the time of dissolution" (XIV 2.)

766 Śrī Śaṅkara understands two kinds of entities by the two *puruṣas*. One consists of all beings and is hence destructible. The other is the *māyā-śakti* of the Lord which is eternal. This is described as the *kūṭastha puruṣa*, because it is unchangeable, or because it is full of deceptive powers of illusion. Śrī Madhva understands by the *hara puruṣa* all embodied souls and by the *akṣara puruṣa* matter or *prakṛti*, that is, Lakṣmī.

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वय्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य विभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ १७ ॥

17. *The Highest Person is other than these He is described as the Supreme Self (in the Scriptures)—He who, having entered the three worlds, supports them as the Immutable One and the Lord*

But the Highest Person is other than the bound and freed selves denoted by the words, 'destructible' and 'indestructible' That is He constitutes an entirely different entity. He is described in all the *Śruti* texts as the Supreme Self From the description as the Supreme Self alone, it may be made out that the Highest Person is indeed an entity different from the bound and freed souls How? He who, having entered the three worlds,<sup>767</sup> supports (them) *Loka* (the world) is what is perceived A triad of worlds refers to three perceivable things He who enters, as the Self, (this) triad, which can be made out from the authority of the scriptures to consist of non-intelligent matter, the intelligent soul in association with it and the free soul, and supports (them)—He constitutes an entity different from it (i.e., the group of three) which has to be pervaded and supported by Him

For this reason also He is an entity different from the three worlds mentioned above—because He is the Immutable One and the Lord He whose nature is immutable, is certainly an entity different from non-intelligent matter whose essential nature is change, from the intelligent soul, which follows it (in being changeable) on account of association with it, and from the freed soul which formerly, on account of fitness for association with non-intelligent matter, was in association therewith. Likewise, the Lord<sup>768</sup> of these 'three worlds' is an entity different from that which has to be ruled.

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ १८ ॥

767. The three worlds of *bhūloka*, *bhuvloka* and *svarloka*, according to Śrī Śaṅkara. T. C. explains how the etymological meaning of 'loka' is needed here in view of the context requiring that the otherness of the Highest Person is to be made out from His entering the three worlds.

768. The *Isvara* here has also to be taken as the *Śeṣa* (T. C.).

18. *Because I transcend the destructible (puruṣa) and am also higher than the indestructible (puruṣa), therefore I am celebrated as the Highest Person both in the Smṛtis and in the Vedas.*

Because I transcend the destructible *puruṣa* (or the bound soul) by the aforesaid characteristics, and because I am higher, for reasons already stated, than the indestructible *puruṣa* or the freed soul, therefore I am celebrated as the Highest Person in both the *Smṛtis* and the *Vedas*. The *Smṛti* is here spoken of as '*loka*',<sup>769</sup> because it looks at the meaning of the *Vedas*. The meaning is (that I am thus known) in the *Śruti* and in the *Smṛti*.

In the *Śruti*, we have passages like "Having reached the Supreme Light, it (the individual soul) becomes manifest in its own nature. He (the Supreme Light who is attained) is the Highest Person" (Cā Up VIII 12 23)<sup>770</sup>. In the *Smṛti*, we have passages like the following (statement of Akrūra) "(I go to) Him (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) who is indeed the incarnation of a portion of Viṣṇu, the Highest Person who has no beginning, middle nor end, and who is without birth" (V P. V 17 33)<sup>771</sup>.

यो मामेवमसमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।

स सर्वविद्भूजति मा सर्वभावेन भारत ॥ १९ ॥

19. *Whoever, being free from delusion, understands Me thus to be the Highest Person, he knows all and (thereby) worships Me, O Arjuna (Bhārata), in every way*

Whoever, being free from delusion,<sup>772</sup> understands the Highest Person as Myself thus, in the manner already stated, that is, under-

769. *Loka* is glossed by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'in the worlds'. A *deusot* interpretation is 'in the works written by holy men in the world'. *T C* points out that, in juxtaposition with the *Veda*, '*loka*' indicates the *Smṛti*.

770. Vide Śrī-bhāṣya (IV 4 1-2) for an explanation of this passage.

771. *T C* has a note on the word, '*Puruṣottama*', being *yogavādhā*: it stands for the Lord through the joint efforts of etymology and convention. The etymological derivation presents some grammatical difficulty, which is solved by holding '*utams*' to be a relative term, which can be used in relation with the ablative, genitive or locative plural of '*puruṣa*'.

772. The delusion here referred to is that of confounding as one entities which are separate (*T. C.*).

stands Me to be of a different kind from the destructible and the indestructible *puruṣas*, on account of My being immutable in My essential nature and on account of My being endowed with the power to pervade, support and rule and such other faculties—he knows all. That is, he knows all that has to be known as the means for attaining Me. He worships Me in every way. That is, whatever ways of worshipping Me have been indicated as the means for attaining Me, he worships Me by all these measures of worship.<sup>773</sup> Whatever love is evoked in Me by all kinds of acts of knowing having Me for their object, and whatever love is evoked by all modes of worship having Me for their object, both these kinds of love arise in Me by this act of knowing (Me as the Highest Person)

In conclusion, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) praises this knowledge of the nature of the Highest Person :

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयाञ्जय ।

एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥ २० ॥

20 Thus, O sinless one, has this most secret teaching been taught by Me. Knowing this, O Arjuna (Bhārata), one may become possessed of intelligence and a man of fulfilled duties

Thus, this teaching (in Chapter XV)<sup>774</sup> which is the most secret of all the secrets, and which describes My nature as the Highest Person, has been taught to you by Me, considering you to be the fittest to receive it on account of your being sinless. By knowing this, one may become possessed of intelligence and a man of fulfilled duties. The meaning is that whatever disposition of mind is desirable for a person who wishes to attain Me, all that disposition becomes acquired by him and that whatever has to be done by him all that gets done

By this stanza, it is stated that the knowledge relating to the Highest Person, which arises from religious teaching (or *śāstra*) and which has been mentioned immediately before, does all this but not that in the form of direct vision.<sup>775</sup>

773. The word, ' *bhāṣe* ', denoting here action or things (needed for action) extends its meaning so far as to indicate a particular mode (of worship) (*T C*).

774. Śrī Śaṅkara takes the view that the teaching of the Gītā is given in brief in this chapter, where indeed the teaching of all the *Vedas* is concluded

775. The followers of Śrī Rāmānuja rank *Puruṣottama-vidyā* among the various ways of attaining salvation.



## CHAPTER XVI

In the last three chapters were described the real nature of the *prakṛti* and the self, when separated from each other and when in association with each other attachment to the *guṇas* and what is contrary thereto (i.e., transcendence of the *guṇas*), which are the causes (in the reverse order) of their separation and association, the *prakṛti* and the self in all their modes of existence being under the control of the Lord, and the real nature, as the Highest Person, of the Lord, who has objects to control by reason of His being an entity different from the non-intelligent thing (i.e., the *prakṛti*) and the intelligent thing (i.e., the soul) in both the conditions of bondage and freedom, all of which are under His control, on account of His being immutable and His pervading, supporting and ruling all things

Afterwards, the Lord spoke about the division into the divine creation and the demoniacal creation, as relating respectively to those obedient to the *śāstras* and those of an opposite disposition, with the purpose of teaching obedience to the *śāstras* for firmly establishing all the teachings previously given.<sup>776</sup>

**श्रीभगवानुवाच—**

अभय सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्जनियोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दान दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ १ ॥

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागश्शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्व मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ २ ॥

तेजः क्षमा धृतिश्चाश्चमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति सपदं देवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३ ॥

THE LORD SAID .

1 Fearlessness, the utmost purity of mind, firm application to meditation on knowledge (of the self), giving gifts, restraint of the mind, worship, study of the Vedas, practice of austerities, uprightness

<sup>776</sup> This follows G. S. 20, except in omitting reference to conduct, which may however be taken to be included in "all the teachings".

2. Freedom from inflicting injury, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquillity, freedom from calumniating, compassion to all beings, freedom from desire (for sense-enjoyments), gentleness, the sense of shame, freedom from fickle desire :

3. Invincible power, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, freedom from spite, absence of improper pride—these, O Arjuna (*Bhārata*), are his who is born for the divine wealth

Fear is the painful feeling born of the perception of the cause leading to (future) pain in the form of either dissociation from what is desired or attaining what is undesired—freedom from this is fearlessness. The utmost purity of mind is the state in which the *sattva*, that is, the internal organ of perception,<sup>777</sup> is free from contact with *rajas* and *tamas*. Firm application to meditation on knowledge is steady abidance in distinguishing the essential nature of the self in separation from the *prakṛti*.<sup>778</sup> Giving gifts is the giving away of honestly won wealth to the deserving. Restraint of the mind (*dama*) is the steady practice of withdrawing the mind from being directed to the sense-objects. Worship (*yajña*) is the performance of the five great sacrifices and other rituals in the form of the worship of the Lord and without attachment to fruits. Study of the *Vedas* is steadily engaging in study of the *Vedas* with the conviction that all the *Vedas* teach about the Lord with all those (i.e., the gods) controlled by Him and about the methods of worshipping Him. The practice of austerities is the performance of expiatory rites, the observance of the *cāṇḍrāyana* penance, fasting on the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight<sup>779</sup> and doing such other

777. *T. C.* explains that the internal organ of perception which forms the support of *sattva*, is here called 'sattva'. Śrī Śaṅkara also equates *sattva* with the *antahkaraṇa*.

778. 'Jñānayoga' is not here understood as the discipline of knowledge. *T. C.* suggests that it refers only to such knowledge derived from the *śāstras* as is essential for the practice of the disciplines of *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti*. Or it may merely mean meditation which renders clear the knowledge derived from the *śāstras*. Śrī Śaṅkara splits 'jñānayoga' into 'jñāna' and 'yoga', explaining the former as knowledge learnt from the scriptures and preceptors, and the latter as the realisation thereof through conquest of the senses and the practice of concentration.

779. Fasting is usually observed only on the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight (*ekādśī*). *T. C.* suggests that the reference is to the fast on the *ekādśī* day which is an essential preliminary to the dinner on the next day : or it may refer to some penance to be carried out on the twelfth day.

things which confer fitness for doing works pleasing to the Lord. Uprightness is the quality of having the activities of the mind, speech and action directed to one and the same thing in regard to others

Freedom from inflicting injury (*ahimsā*) is abstinence from hurting others. Truthfulness is speaking what is helpful to beings and is at the same time consonant with things as they are actually perceived. Freedom from anger is being free of the agitation of the mind the result of which is hurting others. Renunciation is the giving up of those belongings which work against the welfare of the self. Tranquillity (*śānti*) is the constant practice of restraining the senses from devoted attachment to the sense-objects. Freedom from calumniating is refraining from publishing statements bringing about disaster to others. Compassion (*dayā*) to beings is not being able to remain unmoved by the sufferings of all beings. 'Aloluptvam' is 'alolupaṭvam'. Or the reading is 'alolutvam'<sup>780</sup>. The meaning is being free from desire for sense-enjoyments. Gentleness is freedom from stiffness (in behaviour). The meaning is that it is fitness for the company of good people. The sense of shame is the feeling of shame in doing what ought not to be done. Freedom from fickle desire (*acāpalam*)<sup>781</sup> is being unmoved in the presence of desirable objects.

Invincible power (*tejas*) is the quality of not being overcome by wicked persons. Forgiveness is, even while undergoing suffering caused by others, freedom from agitation towards others on account of that (suffering). Fortitude (*dhṛti*) is the determination even amidst great danger that what ought to be done should be done. Cleanliness (*śauca*) is the fitness, as described in the scriptures, of the body and the mind<sup>782</sup> for doing what is proper. Freedom from spite (*adroha*) is not putting (unwholesome) restraint on others, that is, freedom from hindering the actions of others according to their desires. As regards absence of improper pride, pride in a wrong place is improper pride freedom from it is meant here.

780. If the root is 'lup', 'lolupa' can be derived from its intensive form, whence 'a-lolupa-tvam'. from the root, 'lā', we can similarly get 'alolutvam', meaning freedom from destructive tendencies (T O)

781. Śrī Śaṅkara renders 'acāpalam' as refraining from moving hands, legs, etc., aimlessly.

782. Laterally, external and internal organs.

These qualities are his who is born for the divine wealth. Wealth which is connected with the gods is divine. The gods are those who are intent on obedience to the commands of the Lord. Their wealth is meant here. It is none other than obedience to the commands of the Lord. The meaning is that these are his who is born for this (obedience), that is, born with a disposition inclined therefor, born for carrying it out.

दम्भो दर्पोऽतिमानश्च क्रोधः पाह्व्यमेव च ।

अज्ञान चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सपदमासुरीम् ॥ ४ ॥

*I. Pomp, (perverse) arrogance, self-conceit and anger, similarly rudeness as well as ignorance (belong) to him. O Arjuna (Pārtha), who is born for the demoniacal wealth.*

Pomp is the practice of righteousness for advertising<sup>783</sup> the possession of righteousness (by one's self). Perverse arrogance is the elation which arises from the enjoyment of sense-objects and which destroys the discrimination between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Self-conceit is a high opinion of oneself not in accordance with one's education and birth. Anger is the mental agitation which results in injury to others. Rudeness is the disposition which causes grief to the good. Ignorance is lack of discrimination between the higher and lower principles, and between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.

These qualities are his who is born for the demoniacal wealth. The demons (asuras) are those intent on disobedience to the commands of the Lord.

दैवी सपद्धिमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।

*5. The wealth of the gods is deemed to be (the means) for emancipation, that of the demons for inevitable bondage.*

The wealth which is divine, that is, which is of the form of obedience to My commands is for emancipation, for bringing about deliverance from bondage. The meaning is that it works, step by

<sup>783</sup> Sri Śaṅkara picturesquely explains *dambha* flaunting the banner of righteousness.

step, for the attainment of Myself. The wealth which is demoniacal that is, which is of the form of violating My commands, is for bondage. The meaning is that it works for bringing about a ruinous fall.

To Arjuna who, on hearing this, became exceedingly alarmed on account of his character remaining undermined, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) said

मा शुचस्सपद दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥ ५ ॥

5 Do not grieve, O Arjuna (Pāṇḍava). You are born for the divine wealth

“Do not indulge in grief. Certainly, you are born for the divine wealth, O son of Pāṇḍu” The purport is that this is so because you are the son of Pāṇḍu, who was pre-eminent among the righteous

द्वौ भूतसगौ लोकेऽस्मिन् देव आसुर एव च ।

दैवो विस्तरश प्रोक्त आसुर पाथं मे शृणु ॥ ६ ॥

6 There are two types of creation of embodied beings in this world—the divine and also the demoniacal. The divine has been described at length. Hear (now) from Me, O Arjuna (Pārtha) about the demoniacal (type of creation)

In this world of the effects of *karma*, there are two types of creation of the embodied beings who perform (good and bad) deeds—namely, the divine and the demoniacal. Creation means production<sup>784</sup>. The meaning is that through the influence of previous *karma* in the form of the effects of good and sinful deeds, embodied beings are born, divided (into two classes) even at the time of their birth, for the purpose of acting in accordance with the commands, of the Lord or acting contrary thereto. Of these, the divine creation has been described at length. That is, for the purpose of acting in conformity with whatever mode of conduct the creation of the gods, that is, of those intent on obeying My commands, takes place, that mode of conduct, which consists of *karma-yoga*, *Jñāna-yoga*, and *bhakti-yoga*, has been described at length. For following whatever code of conduct the birth of the demons takes place, that code of conduct hear of Me, that is, hear from Me

784. Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara who renders ‘*carpa*’ as ‘that which is created’

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।

न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥ ७ ॥

7. *Demoniacal men understand neither the path of activity in religion, nor that of renunciation. Nor is cleanliness found in them, nor even regulated observance, nor truthfulness.*

The demoniacal men do not understand, do not know at all, the path of activity in religion and that of renunciation,<sup>785</sup> that is, the religious observance prescribed in the *Vedas* as the means for worldly prosperity and that as the means for salvation. Cleanliness is the fitness, as enjoined in the *sūtras*, for performing the rites prescribed in the *Vedas*. That cleanliness, whether external or internal, is not found among the demoniacal. Nor even regulated observance. Even that regulated observance, consisting of twilight prayers and such other rites, by means of which this internal and external cleanliness is produced, even that regulated observance is not found among them.

For it has been declared "He who does not perform the twilight prayers, is always unclean and is unfit for doing all religious rites" (*Manu*, II. 103). Similarly, truthfulness is also not found among them. That is, speaking what is beneficial to beings and is in accordance with knowledge is not found among them.

Moreover

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।

अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहेतुकम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. *They say: "The universe is unreal, without any foundation and without the Lord. What other thing, indeed, can be brought into existence without the mutual union (of the sexes)? It has sexual desire for its cause."*

(They say that the universe is) unreal<sup>786</sup>. That is, they do not say that this universe, by reason of its being the effect of the *Brahman*,

<sup>785</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara explains *pravṛtti* as what ought to be done to achieve the desirable ends of human life and *nivṛtti* as abstinence from activity leading to evil results.

<sup>786</sup> According to Śrī Śaṅkara, the demoniacal men say that the world is unreal even as they themselves are almost unreal. Śrī Rāmānuja thinks that there is here a reference to philosophical schools which do not accept the *Brahman* as the basis of the world—schools like those of Kapila, Prabhākara, Kumārila, the Jaiṇas, the Bauddhas and the Cārvākas.

who is denotable by the word 'reality' (*satya*).<sup>787</sup> has the *Brahman* for its Self (They say) that it is without any foundation.<sup>788</sup> That is, they do not say that it has the *Brahman* for its foundation. The earth, indeed, which is supported by the *Brahman* as *Ananta*, bears all the worlds. Accordingly, it has been declared "This earth, supported on the head by that great serpent (*Ananta*), bears the garland of worlds with the gods and men therein" (V P II 5 27) (They say) that it is without the Lord. That is, they do not say that this (universe) is ruled by Me, who am the Lord of all and the Supreme *Brahman* and who will the truth. It has already been stated "I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me" (X 8)

And they also say thus "What other thing can indeed be brought into existence without mutual union?"<sup>789</sup> That is, men, beasts and other creatures are known to be born through the mutual union of the male and the female. What else is known which is not of such a description? The meaning is that nothing at all (of this kind) is known. Hence it is to be concluded that this universe in its entirety has sexual desire for its cause.

एता दृष्टिमवष्टम्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।

प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽशुभा ॥ ९ ॥

9 Maintaining this view, these inauspicious<sup>790</sup> men of lost souls mean intelligence and fiercely harmful deeds, are born to bring about destruction to the world.

Maintaining, that is, following this view, these men of lost souls, by whom the self is not perceived as distinct from the body, who

787 Vide *CA Up* (VIII 3 4-5)

788 According to Śrī Śaṅkara, what is denied is that the universe rests on the foundation of *dharma* and *adharma*.

789 T C notices a reading 'akṛichit' for 'kṛmanyat'. Śrī Śaṅkara renders the last question thus "What else can be the cause (of the universe other than lust)?" Subba Rao explains that Śrī Madhva's view is the reference here is to the philosophy that the world is not produced by things mutually related as cause and effect, that it is quite a different thing, being neither real nor unreal, and that it is caused by *kāma* in the sense that it has its roots innescience which is the cause of *kāma*.

790 Śrī Śaṅkara reads 'akṛūh' (enemies) for 'akṛūhāḥ' here. T C explains the inauspiciousness of these men as infecting with evil even those in contact with them.

are of mean intelligence and lacking in the discrimination that the self is to be known as distinct from the body on account of its being the knower in the body, which is an object of knowledge like pots and such objects, and who are of fiercely harmful deeds, that is, who cause harm to all—(such men) are born to bring about destruction to the world.<sup>791</sup>

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूर दम्भमानमदान्विता ।

मोहाद्गुहीत्वाऽऽद्महान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिब्रता ॥ १० ॥

*10 Entertaining insatiable desires, keeping through delusion unjustly acquired wealth and adopting unholy vows, they act, full of pomp, pride and arrogance*

Entertaining desires which are insatiable, that is, which relate to objects difficult to get, keeping, through delusion, that is, through ignorance and in the hope that such desires can be satisfied, ill-gotten possessions, that is, wealth unjustly acquired, and adopting unholy vows, that is, committed to vows not laid down in the *sāstras* these act, full of pomp, pride and arrogance

चिन्तामपरिमेया च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिता ।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिता ॥ ११ ॥

*11. Indulging in immeasurable worries extending to the dissolution of the world, holding the satisfaction of sensual desires as the highest (ideal) and assured that this is all.*

Those who are about to die now or tomorrow indulge in worries which are unlimited, that is, undefinable, and which extend to the dissolution of the world,<sup>792</sup> that is, which relate to objects (the means for the realisation thereof) requiring to be striven for till the time of the total dissolution of the material universe. Similarly, they hold the satisfaction of sensual desires as the highest (ideal), that is, they regard nothing else than sensual enjoyments as the highest object of human pursuit. They feel assured that this is all—that is, they have

791. Śrī Śaṅkara glosses 'asad-grāhān' as 'asubha-niścayān', inauspicious resolves.

792. 'Pralayaṇāntarā' is rendered by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'lasting till death'.



gained the conviction that there is no object of human pursuit greater than this

वाशापाशशतैर्बद्धा. कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।

ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥ १२ ॥

12 Bound by hundreds of ties of hope, wholly given over to desire and anger, they strive for heaps of wealth through unjust means for the gratification of sensual desires

They are bound by hundreds of ties of hope, that is, bound by hundreds of ties called 'hope'. They are wholly given over to desire and anger that is, they are devoted solely to desire and anger. In order to gratify sensual desires they strive for heaps of wealth through unjust means.

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।

इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥ १३ ॥

13 "This has now been gained by me, that wish I will (hereafter) fulfil. This wealth is mine, and that also shall again become (mine)."

This—that is, wife, sons and every other thing—has been gained by me solely through my skill, and not through destiny and such other (unperceivable) causes. This wish <sup>793</sup> I will myself fulfil and not with the help of destiny and such things. This wealth, gained through my skill, is with me. And this also shall again become mine solely through my skill.

असौ मया हतश्शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।

14 "This enemy has been killed by me. Others too I shall kill.

This enemy has been killed by me who am endowed with strength. Other enemies, also, I who am heroic and of unfailing valour, shall kill. Of what use here is the help of destiny, which has been invented by those of dull minds and the weak?

793. 'Manoratham' is rendered by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'Manastuphakarasi', that which causes joy to the mind.

*Lakewise, too :*

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान् सुखी ॥ १४ ॥

14 *I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am endowed with extraordinary powers, I have strength, I have happiness "*

I am the lord that is, I am absolutely independent, and I am also the controller of others I am the enjoyer that is, I am the enjoyer of my own accord, and not with the help of destiny or any such thing I am endowed with extraordinary powers<sup>794</sup> that is, I am of my own accord endowed with extraordinary powers, and not on account of a certain destiny or such other cause Similarly, I have strength by myself, and have happiness by myself

आद्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।

यस्ये दास्यामि मोक्षं इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥ १५ ॥

15 *" I am rich and nobly born Who else is there equal to me ? I will perform sacrifices, I will make gifts, I will be happy "—thus (they think) deluded by ignorance*

" And I am by myself rich And in this world who else is there equal to me, winning every kind of glory with his own skill? I myself will perform sacrifices, I will make gifts, and I will be happy " Thus they think, deluded by ignorance, that is, deluded by the ignorant belief that they can by themselves offer sacrifices, gifts and such other things,<sup>795</sup> without needing the grace of the Lord

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुची ॥ १६ ॥

16. *Bewildered by numerous thoughts, surrounded by a network of delusion, addicted to sensual enjoyments, they fall down into impure hell.*

794. Like unusual wisdom, etc Or ' *siddha* ' may mean one who has attained his desires (T C)

795. Their interest in religious works such as sacrifices is due to the desire to show themselves off as pious and to win honour (T C.).

Supposing that it is possible to do, by themselves, all things without the aid of destiny, the Lord and such other necessary factors needed for producing results, they are bewildered by numerous thoughts to the effect, "Thus may I do, and this I may do, and another thing I may do" In this manner, they are surrounded by a network of delusion. Greatly addicted to sensual enjoyments, they die in the middle (of their attempts to satisfy their desires) and fall into impure hell.

आत्मसम्भाविता. स्तम्भाः धनमानमदान्विताः ।

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ १७ ॥

17 *Self-conceited, complacently inactive, full of the intoxication of wealth and pride, they worship ostentatiously by means of what have the name of sacrifices, in a way not in accord with the commands of the śāstras*

They are honoured only by themselves the meaning is that they honour themselves by themselves. They are complacently inactive deeming themselves perfect, they do nothing whatsoever. How (is this so)? They are full of the intoxication of wealth and pride full, that is, of the intoxication caused by wealth and the pride from learning and noble birth. They worship by means of what have the name of sacrifices.<sup>796</sup> that is, by means of sacrifices having as their objective the name (of sacrifices), having for their sole purpose getting known as performers of sacrifices.

These, too, they perform for the purpose of ostentation, with a view to become famous as being performers of sacrifices and in a manner not in accord with the commands of the śāstras that is, at variance with sacred commandments.<sup>797</sup>

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to state that they offer sacrifices, having also become of the following description

796. 'Nāma-yajñatḥ', according to Śrī Śaṅkara, means 'through sacrifices which are so only in name'. T. C. refers either to this, in its own words, or quotes some similar explanation to the effect: 'Yajña-sāmakhya-mātrāt, na tu vatsuto'asau yajñatḥ' (This is not a sacrifice really it has merely the name of a sacrifice).

797. This may be taken to mean that they perform sacrifices neither in the manner of those seeking salvation nor in that of those desiring worldly prosperity.

अहंकार बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च सन्निता ।

मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽन्यसूयका ॥ १८ ॥

18 Given over to egotism, strength, self-conceit, desire and anger, these envious men hate Me in their own and others' bodies

They are given over to the egotism which is in this form, "Without the help of anyone else, I myself do all things" similarly, to their strength, which is thus regarded, "My strength is itself equal to doing all things" and hence to self-conceit which amounts to thinking, "There is none like me" to desire which consists in thinking, "Everything gets done by means of the mere desire of myself, who am of this description" and to anger, to the effect, "Those who do towards me what I do not like, all these I will kill" Thus, given over to these, they become envious of Me,<sup>798</sup> the Supreme Person,<sup>799</sup> dwelling in their own bodies and in the bodies of others and causing all beings to act and they hate Me. The meaning is, "By perverse arguments, they attribute flaws to My position, and being unable to endure Me, they perform all rituals like sacrifices and others, given over to egotism and such other qualities"

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान् ससारेषु नराधमान् ।

क्षिपाम्यजलमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ १९ ॥

19 These haters, cruel, the worst of men and unholy I throw continually into the cycles of birth and death, into none other than demoniacal wombs

Those who hate Me in this way, I throw them, the cruel ones who are the worst of men and unholy,<sup>800</sup> into the cycles of birth and death, that is, old age, death etc., coming one after another and occurring again and again, and even there into none other than demoniacal wombs.<sup>801</sup> That is, I throw them into those embodiments only which

798 Śrī Sāṅkara says that they are envious of the qualities of the righteous. T. C. explains that the functioning of the Lord to promote true welfare causes envy.

799 This is intended to remind us of XV. 15 (T. C.)

800 T. C. suggests that the four adjectives in this verse indicate the four types of evil-doers described in VIII. 15.

801 In the wombs of cruel creatures like tigers, lions, etc. (Śrī Sāṅkara)

are opposed to being friendly towards Me. The meaning is that I alone link them to cruel minds which are the cause of their activities leading to the attainment by each of them of his particular embodiment

आसुरी योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनिजन्मनि ।

मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥ २० ॥

20 *Fallen into demoniacal wombs, deluded in birth after birth and without attaining (knowledge about) Me at all, O Arjuna (Kaunteya) ! they go from there to the lowest state*

They attain births which are against friendliness towards Me. And they get deluded repeatedly in birth after birth that is, they get perverse knowledge about Me. Without attaining Me at all, that is, without attaining the knowledge that Vāsudeva, the Lord, remains as the ruler of all <sup>802</sup> they go from there, from that birth, only to the lowest state

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to describe the root-cause of the perdition of the soul<sup>803</sup> which is meant by the demoniacal nature

त्रिविधं नरकस्यैतद् द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

काम क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ २१ ॥

21 *Desire, anger and greed constitute the triple gateway to the hell which is ruinous to the self. Therefore, one should give up these three*

This is the threefold gateway of this hell, which is in the form of a demoniacal nature, and it is ruinous to the self. It is constituted of desire, anger and greed. The nature of these has, indeed, been explained earlier. 'Gateway' here means the path, the cause. Therefore, one must give up these three. Hence, that is, because they are the cause for (falling into) an extremely terrible hell,<sup>804</sup> one must completely give up this group of three, consisting of desire, anger and greed

802 As there can be no possibility of the demoniacal persons attaining the Lord, what is here denied is their knowledge of even the elementary fact of the Lord's existence, as taught in the scriptures (T. C.).

803 This consists in utter failure to realise the true nature of the soul as it is (T. C.).

804. This hell is made up of misery and delusion (Śrī Śaṅkara). T. C. points out that the demoniacal nature is a hell more terrible than the hells where through suffering sins are expiated for this hell causes the accumulation of sins

एतैर्बिमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।

आचरत्यात्मनश्चेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ २२ ॥

22 One who has escaped from these three ways to darkness works, O Arjuna (Kaunteya)' for the good of the self and thence reaches the supreme goal

One who has escaped from these, that is, from desire, anger and greed, which are the ways to darkness and the causes of perverse knowledge about Myself, works for the good of the self. Having gained knowledge about Myself, he strives to be friendly towards Me. Thence (i.e., from striving for the good of the self), he reaches the supreme goal which is none other than Myself.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) teaches us that the chief cause leading to this hell is the disregard of the *sāstras*.

यश्शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।

न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परा गतिम् ॥ २३ ॥

23 Whoever, disdaining the commands of the scriptures, leads his life according to his desires—he does not attain fulfilment, nor happiness, nor the supreme goal

The scriptures (*sāstra*) stand for the *Vedas*. 'Vidhi' is a mandate. He who disdains My commandment known as the *Vedas* and leads a life according to his desires, that is, follows the path which is in accordance with his own desires, does not attain fulfilment. That is, he does not attain any fulfilment relating to the hereafter. Nor does he attain the slightest happiness,<sup>805</sup> nor the supreme goal. The meaning is: how can he attain the supreme goal?

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥ २४ ॥

805 'Siddhi' is glossed by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'puruṣārtha-yogyatā', fitness for attaining any of the fundamental aims of life. T. C. explains that it may mean success in pursuing the means for paradisaical happiness or the enjoyment of such happiness along with the gods.

24 Therefore, the scripture is your authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Knowing the work enjoined in the ordinances of the scriptures, it behoves you to do it here (in this state of bondage to karma).

Therefore, the scripture is the only authority for you in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, in establishing the distinction between what is to be adopted<sup>806</sup> and what is to be given up. You should know, that is, understand as it is without excess or diminution, the basic reality and the work enjoined in the ordinances of the *sāstras*—the Supreme Reality known as the Highest Person taught by the *Vedas*, as supplemented by such authorities as the *Dharma-sāstras*, the *Itihāsas* and the *Purānas* (including the accepted code of conduct), and the work taught by them as constituting the means for attaining Him and as being pleasing to Him. It behoves you then to perform it—that is, it behoves you (always) to follow it alone.

806 By 'adoption' is meant acceptance by the mind as laid down in the *sāstras*.

## CHAPTER XVII

It has been taught through the description of the division (of creation) into (that of) the gods and (of) the demons that the knowledge of the Reality to be attained and the knowledge of the means of attaining it have their roots only in the *Vedas*. Now (in this chapter) it is taught how whatever is not ordained by the *śāstras* is fruitless because of its being demoniacal, how what is ordained in the *śāstras* is of three kinds according to the *gunas*, and how that which is established in the *śāstras* is to be defined.<sup>807</sup>

In this matter, Arjuna does not understand the fruitlessness of what is not enjoined in the *śāstras*.<sup>808</sup> So he questions with a wish to know the different kinds of fruits arising from the *sattva* and other *gunas* in respect of sacrifices and other religious rites, which are not prescribed in the *śāstras*, but are (performed) with faith.

**अर्जुन उवाच—**

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विता ।

तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तम ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

*I But what is that, O Kṛṣṇa, in which they remain—those who disregarding the commands of the scriptures, worship with faith? Is it sattva, rajas, or tamas?*

Those who worship with faith, disregarding the commands of the scriptures<sup>809</sup>—what is that in which they remain? Is it *sattva*? Or is

807. Vide *G. S.* 21

808 Here and under the next verse *T. U.* clearly explains the purport of Arjuna's question. Religious rituals not ordained in the scriptures are seen to be performed with faith by intelligent men. When not intended for worldly welfare, they must have supernatural effects. As contrasted with scripturally sanctioned rites, they may have less lasting or less valuable fruits. Because of the association with faith, such rituals tend to be *adharma* because they are non-scriptural, they may be *tāmasa*. On account of the mixture of both these tendencies, they may be *rājasa*.

809 Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that the question refers to those who, from observing the conduct of wise persons, resort to worship with faith, though ignorant of the injunctions of the *śāstras* regarding such worship. It cannot, he says, refer to those who, while knowing the *śāstras*, disdain their injunctions, for such persons cannot be said to possess faith. Śrī Madhva thinks that the question relates to those who disregard the injunctions of the scriptures through ignorance.



it *rajas*, or *tamas*? 'Nipphā' means 'sthit' 'Sthit' is that in which one remains. *Sattva* and other qualities alone are mentioned here as 'nipphā'. The meaning is do they remain in *sattva* or in *rajas* or in *tamas*?

Questions having been put to Him in this manner, the Lord, keeping in His mind the fruitlessness of faith in what is not ordained in the *śāstras* and of worship and other rites actuated thereby, and with a view to show that the triple division according to the *gunas* pertains only to sacrifices and other rituals prescribed in the *śāstras*, teaches here that faith in what is ordained in the *śāstras* is of three kinds.<sup>810</sup>

श्रीनगवानुवाच—

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिना सा स्वभावजा ।

सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति ता शृणु ॥ २ ॥

THE LORD SAID

2 The faith of (all) embodied beings is of three kinds. It arises from their natural dispositions. It is characterised by *sattva*, by *rajas* and by *tamas*. Hear about it.

The faith of all embodied beings is of three kinds. And it arises from their natural dispositions. *Svabhāva* (the natural disposition) is the condition (or attribute) peculiar to one's own nature.<sup>811</sup> It is the peculiar individual taste (*ruci*) due to the unconscious subtle impressions of the past (i.e., of earlier births). Wherever there is taste, there faith is born. For faith is ardour in respect of the means with the conviction that this (expedient) can bring about one's desired object. Unconscious subtle impressions (*vāsanā*), taste (*ruci*) and faith (*śrad-dhā*) are the attributes of the self arising from its association with the *gunas*. The *sattva* and other *gunas*, which are the attributes of the body, the senses, the internal organ of perception and sense-objects, generate these attributes of the self (namely), *vāsanā* and others, (these

810 What has been taught in XVI 23 is reiterated. Arjuna has not forgotten the teaching. He may take it to mean that the results of rituals not enjoined by the *śāstras* are inferior.

811 Śrī Śaṅkara defines *svabhāva* as the impression of good and other kinds of action, done in past births, which becomes manifest at the time of death. T. C. says that 'svabhāva' here means a characteristic attribute, hence its identification with *ruci*, which leads to *śrad-dhā*.

*gunas*) can be known only through their results. The meaning is that they (i.e., *vāsānā*, *ruci* and *śradddhā*) arise from experience with the body and other organs united with *sattva* and other *gunas* <sup>812</sup>

And therefore this faith is of three kinds as characterised by *sattva*, by *rajas* and by *tamas*. Hear about this faith. The meaning is, of whatever nature is this faith, hear about that nature

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।

श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धस्त एव स ॥ ३ ॥

3. The faith of everyone, O Arjuna (*Bhārata*)' is in consonance with his internal organ of perception. Every (lit this) person is made up of faith. Of whatever faith he is, that indeed is he

'*Sattva*' (here) means the internal organ of perception. The faith of every person is in consonance with his internal organ of perception. The meaning is that with whatever *guna* his internal organ of perception is associated, faith arises having that for its object. <sup>813</sup> The word, '*sattva*', is intended to suggest the body, the senses and other things already mentioned <sup>814</sup> Every (lit this) person is made up of faith, that is, is a modification of faith. Of whatever faith a man is, that is, with whatsoever faith a person is endowed, that indeed is he that is, he is a modification of faith of that kind. What is said is that the attainment of the fruits is principally dependent on faith, because if one is associated with faith about a virtuous action, he becomes united with the fruits of (such) virtuous action

He (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa*) further explains the same thing <sup>815</sup>

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान् यक्षरक्षांसि राजसा ।

प्रेतान् भूतगणाभ्यान् ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥ ४ ॥

812. While the self is pure in its essential nature, these are the particular modifications of its attributive knowledge caused by the association, arising from *karma*, with the *prakṛti* made up of the *gunas* (*T. C.*)

813. The *vāsānā* creates *ruci* and makes the *sattva* or some such *guna* predominant. What that *ruci* has for its object, that also will be the object of the *śradddhā*

814. This is said to avoid conflict with what has been said in the previous verse about *śradddhā* being *śraddhā*

815. That is, the dependence of different types of results on different types of faith.

4. *Those who are characterised by the sattva-guṇa worship the gods. Those who are characterised by the rajo-guṇa worship the Yakṣas and the Rākṣasas. And other men who are characterised by the tamogūṇa worship the dead and the hosts of spirits.*

Those who are full of the *sattva-guṇa* and are associated with the faith characterised by the *sattva-guṇa*, worship the gods (without desire for fruits and with the conviction that the Lord is the Internal Controller of the gods). What is said is that the faith in the worship of the gods, which is productive of pre-eminent joy unmixed with pain, is what is derived from the *sattva-guṇa*. Those characterised by the *rajo-guṇa* worship the Yakṣas and the Rākṣasas. And other men characterised by the *tamo-guṇa* worship the dead and the hosts of spirits.<sup>816</sup> The meaning is that the faith derived from the *rajo-guṇa* gives rise only to slight happiness mingled with pain, while the faith derived from *tamas* is productive of very slight happiness and is almost pain.<sup>817</sup>

Thus, there is distinction among the results, as arising from the *guṇas*, only in the case of sacrifices and other rites which are prescribed in the *śāstras* and performed with faith. There is not even the slightest jot of happiness in penances,<sup>818</sup> sacrifices and such other works which are not prescribed in the *śāstras*, as being opposed to My commandments. On the other hand, there can only be disaster from them. Making clear this, felt in His heart, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) says:

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जना ।

दम्भाहङ्कारसयुक्ता. कामरागबलान्विता ॥ ५ ॥

कर्शयन्तश्शरीरस्य भूतभ्राममचेतसः ।

मा चैवान्तश्शरीरस्य तान्विद्वद्वासुरनिभयान् ॥ ६ ॥

5. *Those men who perform terrible penances not ordained by the śāstras, who are full of vanity and pride and are impelled by desire, attachment, and vigour (associated with these)*

816 The *dhūta-guṇas*, according to Śrī Śaṅkara, are the 'seven mothers' and others according to T C, the retinue of Rudra.

817. The results of worship consist of intimate union with or residence in the worlds of the objects of worship (T. C.)

818. Another reading, *dānatapoyāgyaprabhṛtṣu*, requires the addition of 'gifts' before 'penances'.

6. *Who lack the power of thinking and who starve the collection of elements in their bodies and Me also dwelling within the body—know these to have a firm faith which is demoniacal*

Those men who perform penances not ordained by the *sāstras*, even though these (penances) are very terrible—This is illustrative and intended to indicate other practices of a similar kind. Those who perform sacrifices and other rituals, not ordained by the *sāstras* and requiring much effort, are full of vanity and pride and are impelled by desire, attachment and vigour (associated therewith)—they starve the collection of elements including the earth in their bodies. They also starve the individual soul which forms apart of Myself<sup>819</sup> and dwells within the body.

Those who perform penances and carry out sacrifices and other rites in this way—know them to have a faith which is demoniacal. The faith of the demons is demoniacal faith. And the demons are indeed those who work against My commands. In the passage, “They fall down into impure hell” (XVI 16), it has already been stated that because of their working against My commands, there is not for them association even with the slightest amount of joy, but that they fall into a multitude of evils.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) then elaborates the distinctions arising from the *gunas* in the case of sacrifices and other rituals prescribed in the *sāstras*—which indeed is the matter under discussion now. And there the three kinds of food are first described, because the increase of the *sattva* or of other *gunas* has its roots in food. The *Śrūti*s, indeed, declare thus: “The mind, my dear child, consists of food” (*Cā Up* VI. 5 4)<sup>820</sup> and “When the food is pure, the mind becomes pure” (*Ibid* VII 26 2).

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रिय ।

यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥ ७ ॥

819 According to Śrī Śaṅkara, starving the Lord is failure to carry out His commands. Belittling the Lord is starving Him, says Śrī Madhva. *T C* explains that the delimiting attribute, ‘*anta śarīrasthah*’, when considered along with such passages as XIII. 2 and XV 7, indicates that only the individual self is referred to as ‘Myself’.

820 ‘Food’ (*anna*) has the sense of the element of earth. A subtle modification of this element in the food eaten is believed to nourish or strengthen the mind.

7 *The food dear to all is also of three kinds, so too (are) sacrifice, penance and charity. Hear about this distinction among them.*

Even the food dear to the entire host of (all) beings is of three kinds, on account of its link with the three *gunas* consisting of the *sattva* and others. So too, indeed, sacrifice is also of three kinds. Likewise penance and charity (are of three kinds). Hear about this distinction among them. That is, hear about this distinction, which is to be (lit. being) stated about these foods, sacrifices, penances and gifts, based on the differences arising from the *sattva* and other *gunas*.

आयुस्सत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धना ।

रस्या स्निग्धा. स्थिरा हृद्या आहारास्सात्त्विकप्रिया ॥ ८ ॥

8 *The foods that promote longevity, mental vigour, energy, health, pleasure and happiness and that are full of (sweet) juices, are rich in fats, have enduring effects and are agreeable, are dear to men characterised by the *sattva* guna.*

To one associated with the *sattva* guna, foods full of the quality of the *sattva* become dear <sup>821</sup>. And foods full of the quality of the *sattva* promote mental vigour. '*Sattva*' (after '*āyus*') is the internal organ of sense. Knowledge, which is a product of the internal organ of sense, is here (indirectly) referred to by the word, '*sattva*'. For the *sattva* (guna) is the cause of the growth of knowledge, as stated in "From the *sattva*, knowledge is born" (XIV 17). Even the food which is full of the quality of the *sattva*, is the cause of the growth of knowledge. Similarly, they (i.e., foods full of the quality of the *sattva*) promote energy and health. They also promote pleasure and happiness. During the time of digestion, they, by themselves, promote happiness through the performance of actions productive of happiness. They are full of juices, that is, full of sweet juices. They are rich in fats, full of oil. They are enduring, that is, they give rise to enduring effects <sup>822</sup>. They

821 Each *guna*, through experiences characterised by it, gives rise to a *rāśā*; this in turn creates a taste for what is similar or concordant. In this way, foods of a particular kind are dear to persons characterised by a particular *guna* (T. C.)

822 T. C. quotes texts from works on the *Āyurveda* system of medicine to show that things having sweet taste are the most nourishing and healthy. Energy is explained as the strengthening of the vital force and the digestive system, while the state of health is one of the humours in equilibrium. Such foods give rise to enduring effects in the form of tissues in the body and of health and strength.

are agreeable : they constitute particular instances<sup>822</sup> of what is delightful. Foods of this kind, which are full of the quality of *sattva*, are dear to the person characterised by the *sattva* *guna*

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।

आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदा ॥ ९ ॥

9. The foods which are bitter, sour, (very) salty, very hot, (very) pungent, astringent and inflaming, are dear to one characterised by the *rajoguna* they produce pain, grief and disease

Those (foods) which are bitter, sour, salty, very hot, (very) pungent, astringent and inflaming, are those which have the taste of bitterness and the taste of sourness, which are excessively salty very hot and very pungent,<sup>824</sup> and which are astringent and inflaming. Very pungent things are those which are difficult to use on account of being very cold, very hot etc. Those which are astringent cause drying up and emaciation. Those which are inflaming cause burning. Foods of this kind are dear to one characterised by the *rajoguna*. Because they are of the nature of *rajas*, they promote pain, grief and disease, and also promote (a further increase of) *rajas*.

यातयाम गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।

उच्छिष्टमपि चापेक्ष्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥ १० ॥

10. That food which is not fresh, which has lost its taste, is putrid and stale, which is of the leavings and unholy, is dear to one characterised by the *tamoguna*

'*Yāta-yāmam*' (which has been rendered as 'not fresh' and which literally means 'that which has stood over for three hours') means that which has been kept for a long time<sup>825</sup>. That which

822. There is another reading '*ramasīya-veśāḥ*' (of beautiful forms) for '*ramasīya-rī ceshāḥ*' adopted for the translation.

824. Śrī Śaṅkara would apply the adverb 'very' to all the qualities enumerated.

825. '*Yāta-yāmam*' is rendered by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'half cooked' to avoid indicating the same lack of flavour which is expressed by '*gatarasam*'. T. C. explains that '*yāma*' means also the best element in a thing and that '*yāta-yāmam*' may mean something which has lost its vital qualities.

has lost its taste is that which has given up its natural taste 'Pūti' (rendered as 'putrid') means having a bad smell. What is stale is that which has attained a different taste through the passage of time. What is of the leavings is that which has been left after eating by those who are other than preceptors and similar persons<sup>826</sup>. That which is unholy is that which is unfit for sacrifice. The meaning is that it does not form the remains of a sacrifice.

Food of this kind which is full of the quality of *tamas*, is dear to one characterised by the *tamo-guna*. That which is eaten, namely, food alone is 'bhojanam'. And it promotes the (further) growth of *tamas*. Therefore, only food characterised by the *sattva*, should be eaten by those who wish for their welfare in order that there may be increase of the *sattva-guna* (in them).

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।

यष्टव्यमेवेति मनस्समाधाय स सात्त्विक ॥ ११ ॥

11 That sacrifice (or worship) is characterised by the *sattva-guna* which is performed by those who have no desire for fruits, with their minds convinced that it assuredly should be performed as laid down in the *śāstras*.

That sacrifice is characterised by the quality of *sattva*, which is performed by persons who have no desire for fruits, with their minds convinced that it should assuredly be performed, that is, that it should be performed for its own sake as worship of the Lord and as enjoined in (scriptural) mandates (*vidhidrṣṭa*), that is, as found in the *śāstras* associated with hymns, materials and rituals.

अभिसन्धाय तु फल दम्भार्थमपि चैव य ।

इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ त यज्ञ विद्धि राजसम् ॥ १२ ॥

12 Know, O Arjuna (*Bharataśreṣṭha*), this sacrifice to be characterised by *rajas* which is performed in expectation of fruits and for the sake of ostentation.

826. The others include the father, the elder brother, and the husband in the case of the wife. According to the southern school, devotees of God are also to be included. This view is attacked in a long note by the T. C.

That sacrifice which is performed by those who entertain expectations of fruits, which is full of ostentation and which has fame for its objective—know that sacrifice to be characterised by the quality of *rajas*.

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।

श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञ तामस परिचक्षते ॥ १३ ॥

13. The sacrifice which is without authorisation, which makes use of materials not sanctioned by the *śāstras*, which is performed without chanting holy hymns and without giving away gifts, and which is not actuated by faith—(such a sacrifice), they say, is characterised by the *tamoguna*

They declare that sacrifice to be characterised by *tamoguna*, which is without authorisation, without the (approving) words of Brāhmaṇas, the meaning being that it is without the injunction, "Perform the sacrifice", from Brāhmaṇas who are learned and of good conduct which is *asrīṣṭānna*,<sup>827</sup> that is, which uses materials (or wealth) not prescribed in the *śāstras* in which holy hymns are not chanted which is without distribution of gifts and which is not actuated by faith

Then, in order to describe the threefold division of austerities, based on the *guṇas*, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) here mentions the varieties in the nature thereof, as a result of their being carried out by the body, the speech or the mind.

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजन शौचमार्जवम् ।

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीर तप उच्यते ॥ १४ ॥

14 Honouring the gods, the twice-born, the elders and persons of great wisdom, (ensuring) purity, rectitude, continence, abstinence from inflicting injury (on others)—these are said to constitute the austerity of the body.

827 T C explains that the reference is to the performance of sacrifices with the help of wealth from sources not authorised by the *śāstras*. That which has been created for the purposes of sacrifice is *śrīṣṭa* what is not *śrīṣṭa* is *asrīṣṭa*. It may be added that 'asrīṣṭānna' literally means 'in which food is not distributed'. This is the meaning which Śrī Śaṅkara adopts.



The honouring of the gods, the twice-born, the elders and persons of great wisdom purity, that is, such acts as bathing in sacred waters <sup>828</sup> rectitude, that is, bodily action in conformity with (the impulse of) the mind continence, that is, being free from such activities as looking at women regarding them as objects of enjoyment abstinence from inflicting injury, that is, not afflicting living beings—(all) this is said to constitute the austerity of the body

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्य सत्य प्रियहित च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाम्यसन चैव वाङ्मय तप उच्यते ॥ १५ ॥

15 The speech which is not distressing and which is truthful, agreeable and beneficial, and also the recitation of the Vedas (by way of prayer) are said to be the austerity of speech

The speech which is not distressing to others and which is truthful, agreeable and beneficial, and the recitation of the scriptures (by way of prayer)<sup>829</sup>—(all) this is said to be the austerity of speech

मनःप्रसादस्सौम्यत्व मौनमात्मविनिग्रह ।

भावसमुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

16 Calmness of mind, benignity, silence, self-restraint and purity of heart—(all) this is spoken of as the austerity of mind.

Calmness of mind, that is, freedom of the mind from anger and other disturbing feelings benignity, that is, the mind being devoted to the welfare of enemies silence,<sup>830</sup> that is, restraining by the mind the tendency to indulge in speech self-restraint (*ātma-vinigraha*), that is, fixing the activity of the mind on the object of meditation purity of heart, that is, being free of thinking about subjects other than the self—all this is the austerity of mind

श्रद्धया परया तप्त तपस्तत्रिविधं नरैः ।

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैस्सात्त्विकं परिब्रजते ॥ १७ ॥

828. 'Purity' here, being included in austerities, can mean only acts tending to bring about purity (T. C.).

829. By 'सौम्यविग्रहसम' is meant 'japa-nyasa' (T. C.).

830. Śrī Madhva renders 'मौनम्' as 'the practice of meditation'.

*17 That threefold austerity performed with perfect faith by men who do not desire any fruits and who are devoted, is said to be characterised by the quality of sattva.*

That threefold austerity which is performed with perfect faith by means of the body, speech and mind by men who do not desire any fruits and who are devoted, that is are constantly engaged in thinking that this is worship of the Supreme Person-this is said to be characterised by the quality of *sattva*.

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् ।

क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्त राजस बलमधुवम् ॥ १८ ॥

*18 And that austerity is here called rājasa which is performed with ostentation for the sake of winning respect, praise and adoration. It is unsteady and unending.*

Esteem by the mind is respect (*satkāra*). Commendation by speech is praise. Adoration consists of such physical acts as bowing down in prostration. That austerity which is performed with expectation of fruits for the purpose of winning respect and such other things and is for the sake of ostentation, that (austerity) is here said to be characterised by the quality of *rajas*. It is unsteady and unending, because of its being impermanent as being the means for fruits like *Swarga*. Unsteadiness is being the cause of swerving (from a steady condition) through the fear of falling. Being unending is the tendency to decline and waste away.<sup>831</sup>

मूढप्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।

परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ १९ ॥

*19 That austerity which is performed out of foolish obstinacy with pain to oneself or for the purpose of destroying an enemy is said to be characterised by the quality of tamas.*

Foolish persons are those who lack the power of discrimination. That austerity which is performed out of foolish obstinacy, that is,

<sup>831</sup> T. C. refers to and refutes the interpretation of '*calaṇi*' as 'transient' and '*adhwam*' as 'unsteady and interrupted by impediments'. The correct distinction is that while the latter shows the fruits to be transient, the former indicates that even while they last, they are uncertain.

from the (indiscriminate) stubborn resolve formed by foolish persons, with pain to oneself, without estimating such things as one's capacity (and the directions of the *śāstras*), or that which is performed for the sake of destroying an enemy—that is declared to be characterised by the quality of *tamas*

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।

देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥ २० ॥

20 That gift is said to be *sāttvika* which is given to one who has not helped, in the faith that it is one's duty to give, and which is given at a proper place and a proper time and to a worthy person

That gift which is given without expectation of fruits and in the faith that it is one's duty to give at the proper time and place to a fit person, and to one who has not helped—that gift is said to be characterised by the quality of *sattva*

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।

दीयते च परिकल्पितं तद्वाजसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 But that which is given in return for help received or in expectation of a future gain, for the sake of fruits thereof and unwillingly, is said to be characterised by the quality of *rajas*

That gift which is given unwillingly, that is, so as to be made up of what is not auspicious,<sup>832</sup> which has a covert glance at help received and to be received, and which is for the sake of fruits, that is said to be characterised by the quality of *rajas*

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।

असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २२ ॥

22 That gift which is given at improper place and time to undeserving persons, without honour and derisively, is declared to be characterised by the quality of *tamas*

832 When the donor is reluctant to give, he may keep the valuable elements in the gift himself and give away only what is inauspicious. Moreover, lack of sincerity and faith in the practice of charity spoils its religious value (T C)

That gift which is given to undeserving persons at improper place and time, without honour, that is, without showing such marks of honour as washing the feet, and derisively, that is, with a feeling of scorn and without a show of civility—that is declared to be characterised by the quality of *tamas*.

Thus, the classification, based on the distinctions of *gunas*, of sacrifices, austerities and gifts prescribed in the *Vedas*, has been taught. Now the definition of the same *Vedic* sacrifices and such other things is taught through their association with the *pranava* (or the syllable, 'Om') and as capable of being indicated by the words, 'tat' and 'sat'.

ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविध स्मृत ।

ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिता. पुरा ॥ २३ ॥

23 The threefold expression, 'Om tat sat', is regarded as (the characterisation) of the *brahman*. As associated with it, the *Brāhmanas*, the *Vedas*, and the sacrifices were made.

This threefold expression, that is, the phrase, 'Om tat sat' <sup>833</sup> is regarded as of the *brahman*, that is, it becomes connected with the *brahman*. Here the *brahman* is the *Veda*. By the word ('*brahman*' denoting secondarily the) 'Veda', the ritual prescribed in the *Vedas* is spoken of. What is prescribed in the *Vedas* consists of sacrifices and similar rituals. Rituals like sacrifices etc. become connected with the expression, 'Om tat sat'. The connection of the word, 'Om', is on account of its being used at the commencement of the recitation of the sacred hymns as an essential part of the ritual prescribed in the *Vedas*. The connection of the words, 'tat' and 'sat', is due to their indicating the character (of the rituals) as worthy of honour. The *Brāhmanas* who are associated with this <sup>834</sup> threefold

833 This ancient formula probably means literally, "Yes, It exists" (L. G. III). The commentators point out that all the three words in it severally denote the *Brahman*. For example, see *Kaṣ. Up.* (II 15) *Ā. Up.* (VI 8 6), and *Mah. N.* (XV 2). Śrī Śaṅkara says that this threefold designation of the *Brahman*, when uttered, purifies sacrifices, austerities, gifts, etc. Śrī Madhva says that the three names of the *Brahman* herein constitute an *arhasāda*, which is mentioned to show that sacrifices, austerities and the giving of gifts have necessarily to be performed.

834 Śrī Madhva explains 'tats' as "by the *Brahman*". Śrī Śaṅkara attributes the creation of the *Brāhmanas*, etc., to the threefold designation itself and explains that this is said by way of praise of the designation.

expression, that is, the three castes who are connected with the *Vedas* (or the *brahman*), as also the *Vedas* and the sacrifices (gifts and austerities) were made of old. The meaning is that they were created by Me in the past.

The way in which the words, 'Om tat sat', are connected (with *Vedic rituals*) is described. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) first speaks about the manner of association with the word, 'Om'.

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।

प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्तास्ततः ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥ २४ ॥

24 Therefore, acts of worship, charity and penance enjoined in (scriptural) injunctions are always begun, after uttering, 'Om', by those who discuss the *brahman*.

Therefore, <sup>835</sup> the acts of worship, charity and penance of those who discuss the *brahman*, that is, those who expound the *Veda*, namely, those belonging to the first three castes—rituals which are given in injunctions, given, that is, in the commandments of the *Vedas*, are always, at all times, begun, after uttering 'Om' at the beginning. The *Vedas* are begun after uttering (the word) 'Om' <sup>836</sup>

Thus the connection of the word, 'Om', with the *Vedas* and the rites prescribed in the *Vedas*, such as the sacrifices has been set out. The connection of the word, 'Om', with the three castes, denoted by the word, 'Brāhmaṇa', on account of the *Vedas* which are connected with the word, 'Om', being memorised (by them) and the rites like sacrifices etc. which are connected therewith, being performed (by them), has also been described.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) then speaks about the manner in which these (i.e., the *Vedas*, the rituals and the performers) are connected with the word, 'tat'.

तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फल यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।

दानक्रियाञ्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥ २५ ॥

835. Because of the relation established between the *Vedas* and the sacrifices, sacrifices, etc., by the Creator (T. C.).

836. T. C. quotes *Manu* (II 74) as indicating the usage in this matter.

25. Acts of sacrifice and austerity as well as various acts of gifting are done without desiring fruits by the seekers of final release, after uttering 'tat'

Those acts of the study of the *Vedas*, sacrifices, austerities and giving away gifts, which are done without desire for fruits by those of the first three castes who seek final release are denotable by the word, 'tat', which refers to the *Brahman*, on account of their being the means for the attainment of the *Brahman*. For it is well known that the word, 'tat', is one that refers to the *Brahman*, as may be, indeed, made out from the following "(He is) *sah, vaś, kah, kṛm, yat, tat, padam anuttamam*" (*M B XIII 254 93*)<sup>837</sup> Thus, the connection of 'tat' has been stated to be based on the fact that the study of the *Vedas*, sacrifices and similar works are to be indicated by the word, 'tat', when they become the means of attaining final release. The connection with the word, 'tat' of the three (higher) castes also arises solely because of their following the study of the *Vedas* and other works in the manner described

Then, in order to touch the manner in which the word 'sat' is linked with these, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) describes the way in which the word, 'sat', is derived in the world

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सवित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।

प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥ २६ ॥

26. This (word) 'sat' is used in the sense of existence and goodness likewise the word, 'sat' O Arjuna (Pārtha), is employed with reference to any action deserving of praise

837 These are names of the Lord given in the 'Prayer of a thousand names', occurring in the *Mahābhārata*. Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, a beloved disciple of Śrī Rāmānuja, thus explains them in his commentary on it " *Saś*, He, who gives to these (devoted) from their childhood knowledge about Himself through the fame acquired by such knowledge amongst all *vaś*, He in whom all things dwell and who dwells in all things, *kaś*, He who shines even when dwelling amid dirty things; *kṛm* He, who is sought after by all unconditionally in order to attain their desires; *yāt*, He who strives for their protection; *tāt*, He who increases knowledge and devotion to Himself, and *padam anuttamam*, He who is their supreme object of attainment "

Both in the usage of the world and in the *Vedas*, this word, 'sat', is used in respect of all things to indicate *sat-bhāva*, existence, and *sādhu-bhāva*, auspiciousness. Likewise, in respect of a wordly action which is deserving of praise, that is, suspicious,<sup>828</sup> and which is performed by someone, the word, 'sat', is used, that is, applied to indicate "This is a good action."

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिस्सदिति बोध्यते ।

कर्म चैव तदर्थाय सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥ २७ ॥

27 Steadfastness (of the three higher castes) in sacrifices, austerities and the giving of gifts is also spoken of as 'sat' and even rituals for their purposes is called only 'sat'.

Therefore, steadfastness of the three (higher) castes who follow the *Vedas* in sacrifices, austerities and the giving of gifts is called *sat*, it being auspicious. Even rituals for their purposes,<sup>829</sup> that is, the sacrifices, gifts and similar works performed for the sake of the three (higher) castes are also called 'sat' only.

Therefore the *Vedas*, the rituals prescribed in the *Vedas* and the three castes denoted by the word, 'Brāhmaṇa' on account of their having been defined through their being connected with the expression, 'Om tat sat', are to be known as distinct and different from what are not the *Vedas* and what are not prescribed in the *Vedas*.

अश्रद्धया कृतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।

असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥ २८ ॥

28 Whatever is offered as oblation (in sacrifices), whatever is given as gift whatever austerities are practised, and whatever action is performed without faith, that, O Arjuna, is called 'asat' (i.e., bad or un-*nai*) It is of no use here or hereafter.

828 The means for realising objectives other than final emancipation are indicated by the word, 'sat' (T. C). *Kāmya-karmas* seem to be meant here.

829. 'Tadarthāya' is explained by Śrī Śaṅkara as 'for the purpose of sacrifices, austerities and gifts', or alternatively as 'for the sake of the Lord'.

Oblations offered in fire and such other rites, when performed without faith, are called '*asat*' (i.e., bad or unreal),<sup>840</sup> though they have been ordained by the scriptures. Why so? Because it (i.e., such a rite) is of no use here or hereafter, that is, it conduces neither to final release nor to results useful for worldly life.<sup>841</sup>

840 *Asat* is the opposite of *sat*. It means non-existence, lack of significance, badness, etc.

841 What is in accordance with the *śāstras* but evokes no faith, or what evokes faith but is not in accordance with the *śāstras* should not be performed, as it can never bring about desired results either here or hereafter. Only that which is prescribed in the scriptures and which is purified by faith should be done. Such is the essence of this chapter (T. C.).



## CHAPTER XVIII

By the preceding two chapters it has been pointed out that only the sacrifices, austerities, gifts and such other works enjoined in the *Vedas* serve as the means for attaining worldly prosperity and the highest good of final release, and nothing else that the common feature of all Vedic works is their connection with the syllable *Om* that among them the distinction between the means for salvation and the means for worldly prosperity is due to their being indicated respectively by the words, 'tal' and 'sat' that the works which are the means for salvation are sacrifices and other such works done without hankering after results that taking up the performances of these (in this manner) is prompted by the dominance of the *sattva* and that the dominance of the *sattva* is effected by using food characterised by the quality of *sattva*

Then (in the 18th chapter) these are expounded<sup>842</sup> -the identity between *tyāga* and *sannyāsa*, both of which have been pointed out as the means for final release the nature of *tyāga* ascribing the agency of all actions to the Lord, who is the ruler of all the acceptability of the *sattva* *guna* being indispensable, as made out through a description of the effects of the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas* the way in which the Supreme Person is attained through works proper to one's own caste and forming the worship of the Supreme Person and the discipline of devotion which is the essential purport of the entire sacred work, the *Gītā*

Out of all this, Arjuna first questions with a view to determine whether *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* are distinct or identical and to determine what their nature is

**अर्जुन उवाच**

सत्यासत्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।

त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥ १ ॥

<sup>842</sup> Vide *G S 22*, where, however, there is no reference to the first two topics cited here, which may be regarded as being included in the attribution of agency to the Lord Śrī Śaṅkara, in his introductory comments on this chapter, says that it summarises the teaching of the entire *Gītā-sāstra* and declares the purport of the *Vedas*, and that all that has been taught in earlier chapters may be made out here. According to Śrī Madhva, this chapter summarises all the teaching about *sādhana* (i.e., the means for the attainment of right knowledge)

## ARJUNA SAID :

1 *I wish to know the truth about sannyāsa, O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣīkeśā), and also about tyāga separately, O destroyer of Kéśava*

Both *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* have indeed been enjoined as the means for final release in such passages as : "Not by rituals, not through (begetting) children, not by wealth, but solely through *tyāga* do some attain immortality. Having well ascertained views (on the Highest Reality, the highest objective of human effort and the means therefor), through a detailed knowledge of the *Vedānta*, and becoming purified in mind through the discipline of *sannyāsa*, these persons who have self-control, at the time of dissolution from their last bodies, (attain the Lord) who is higher than the freed soul and become emancipated from all bonds" (*M Nār* X. 5-6).

I wish to know severally the truth, that is, the real nature of this *tyāga* and *sannyāsa*. The intention here is this. Do the two words, 'sannyāsa' and 'tyāga', have different meanings, or are they of the same meaning? In case they have different meanings, then I wish to know their true nature as being separate (from each other). If, indeed they are of the same meaning, its true nature should be explained.

Then, in order to show conclusively that the nature of these two is one only and that it is such and such, the Lord spoke, pointing out the disagreements among some reasoners <sup>843</sup>

## श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम्यानां कर्मणा न्यास सन्यास कवयो विदुः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥ २ ॥

## THE LORD SAID

2 *The enlightened understand sannyāsa to be the giving up of work, intended for the satisfaction of worldly desires. The wise describe tyāga as the giving up of the fruits of all works*

843. The conclusion arrived at here is from reasoning, which is needed only where there is some ambiguity, and the ambiguity in the present context arises from the disagreements among those who reason about the matter (T C).

Some scholars understand by *sannyāsa* the complete giving up of the works intended for the satisfaction of desires.<sup>844</sup> Some other wise men say that the meaning of the word, '*tyāga*', in the scriptural passages dealing with final emancipation, is nothing other than the giving up of the fruits of all works, whether obligatory, occasional or intended for the satisfaction of desires.<sup>845</sup> Here by referring to the controversy whether the *tyāga* taught in the *tāstras* relates to the works themselves intended for the satisfaction of desires or to the fruits of all works He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) has used in one place the word, '*sannyāsa*', and elsewhere the word, '*tyāga*'. From this it is learnt that the synonymity of the words, '*tyāga*' and '*sannyāsa*', has been accepted (by Him)

Similarly, the decisive statement is about the word, '*tyāga*' alone in the declaration "In regard to that (much-debated) *tyāga* hear from Me the established conclusion, O Arjuna (Bharatasattama)" (XVIII 4). It is also shown that they are synonymous with each other in the passages "But the renunciation (*sannyāsa*) of works which are invariably concomitant (with one's caste and stage in life) is not proper. Their abandonment (*tyāga*) through delusion is declared to be of the quality of *tamas*" (XVIII 7), and "In regard to those who have not renounced (or *atyāgins*), the fruit of works, after their performance (lit. after death), is threefold—undesirable, desirable and mixed, but never is there (any such fruits) to those who have renounced (*sannyāsinas*)" (XVIII 12). It is conclusively established (by the Lord) that the oneness of meaning of these two (words) necessarily follows from these

त्याज्य दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिण ।

यज्ञदानतप कर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥ ३ ॥

844 T. C. sums up the arguments for giving up *kāmya-karmas* thus. Failure to perform them does not give rise to sin, nor disqualify one from other rituals. They do not lead to final release, nor do they form an element in *bhakti-yoga* (Śrī Madhva thinks that the giving up of these *karmas* may mean giving them up altogether, or giving up their fruits)

845 Those who advocate the giving up of the fruits of all works, including *kāmya-karmas*, believe that the only objection to their performance is that their fruits hinder salvation. But they should be performed with a view only to please the Lord. In *Bṛh Up* (III 8 10), it is taught that all rituals give rise to evanescent or permanent results according as they are performed with or without meditation on the Lord (T. C.). Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that the reference is to the giving up of the fruits of other rituals than those intended for the satisfaction of desires, which are not to be done at all.

3. *Some sages declare that (all) works are to be given up as being full of evil, and others that the works of sacrifices, giving of gifts and austerities should not be given up*

Some wise men, that is, the followers of Kapila<sup>846</sup> and those followers of the *Vedas* who accept his opinions, declare that all works, including sacrifices and similar rites, should be given up by one aspiring after salvation, as they (i.e., the rites), being full of desire and similar evils, tend to bind. Other learned men declare that works like sacrifices etc. should not be given up.

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।

त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याध्र त्रिविधस्प्रकीर्तित ॥ ४ ॥

1 In regard to that (much-debated) *tyāga*, hear from Me the established conclusion, O Arjuna (Bharata-sattama)! *Tyāga*, indeed, O Arjuna, (*Puruṣa-vyāghra*), has been described to be of three kinds

In regard to that thing about which there are such conflicting views from disputants, namely, *tyāga*, hear from Me the established conclusion. *Tyāga* has, indeed, been described by Me with respect to works which are sanctioned by the scriptures and are being performed, to be of three kinds<sup>847</sup> - as relating to the fruits, as relating to the works themselves and as relating to the agency. In the statement, "Making over all actions to Me with a mind devoted to the self, free from desire and selfishness, fight without (the) fever (of desire and anxiety)" (III 30) The giving up of fruits consists in taking the view, "Searge and such other fruits, resulting from works, do not belong to me" *Tyāga* as relating to the works (themselves) is the complete giving up of the sense of possession in works, which consists in the belief, "These works are mine, because they are the means for the fruits which are

846 Kapila is the founder of the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy in which it is held that hurting and killing animals in sacrifices make sacrifices evil. Śrī Śaṅkara also thinks that there is a reference here to the Sāṅkhya system. He goes on, however, to insist that the discussion here relates only to those to whom the performance of *karmas* is obligatory and not to the *sannyāsins*. According to Śrī Madhva, the reference here is to the giving up of the fruits of works and not to the giving up of works themselves. Hence these 'wise men' do not essentially differ from the Lord's teachings.

847 Śrī Śaṅkara takes this to refer to the threefold division according to the *gunas*.

(to be) mine. "848 Tyāge as relating to agency is the giving up of the agency of oneself by attributing the agency to the Lord of all.

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्य कार्यमेव तत् ।

5 *The works of sacrifice, giving of gifts, and austerities must not be given up but all this must needs be performed .*

The works of sacrifice, giving of gifts, austerities and the like which have been enjoined in the *Vedas* should never be given up by one who aspires for final release, but should be done day after day till death <sup>849</sup>

Why?

यज्ञो दान तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥ ५ ॥

5 *Sacrifices, giving of gifts, austerities and other such works are the means for purification to the wise*

Works such as sacrifices, giving of gifts and austerities are connected with the castes and orders of life and are the means for purification to the wise, that is, to those given over to meditation. Meditation is worship. The meaning is that to the aspirants after final release who perform such worship throughout their lives, they (i.e., the sacrifices etc.) are destroyers of the ancient *karmas* which obstruct the consummation of such worship.

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्ग त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।

कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चित मतमुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥

6 *It is My decided and excellent opinion that even these works must be done, O Arjuna (Pārtha), giving up selfish attachment and the fruits thereof*

848 The attitude of the aspirant for salvation should be that the Lord impels him to perform works as the means to please Him and for His sake only (T'')

849 This is in contrast with Śrī Śaṅkara's view that works should be performed only till the desire to know the *Brahman* arises and that they should be given up thereafter. Śrī Madhva agrees that works are necessary even for ascetics: their *gyāna* is the wisdom-sacrifice, their *dāna* the giving of knowledge and the assurance of freedom from fear, and their *tapas* purity and continence.

Because sacrifices, giving of gifts, austerities and the like are the means for purification to the wise, therefore it is My decided and excellent opinion that even these works of sacrifice, giving of gifts, austerities and the like, which are of the form of My worship, should be carried out, like worship, day by day till one's death, giving up selfish attachment, that is, the sense of possession in the works, and the fruits thereof, for the purpose of consummating the worship by one who aspires after salvation

नियतस्य तु सन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।

मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामस परिकीर्तित ॥ ७ ॥

7 But the renunciation (*sannyāsa*) of works which are invariably concomitant (with one's caste and stage in life) is not proper. Their abandonment through delusion is declared to be of the quality of tamas.

The renunciation (*sannyāsa*) of works which are invariably concomitant (with one's caste and stage in life) and which consist of the daily and occasional rites like the (five) great sacrifices is not proper.<sup>850</sup> For (otherwise) even the subsistence of the body would not be possible, as stated already. "Even the subsistence of the body would become unsuccessful, with you remaining without doing any work" (III 8). And the subsistence of the body, when carried out by eating the remains of sacrifices, gives rise to correct knowledge. Otherwise, as already pointed out in the statement, "But the wicked eat sin" (III 13), the satisfaction of the appetite by eating food which is not of the remains of the sacrifice and (hence) consists of sin, tends only to produce perverse knowledge in the mind. For, as taught in the *Śruti* text, "The mind, indeed, my dear child consists of food" (*Ck Up* VI 5 4), the mind is nourished by (subtle modifications of) food. Also, in the passage, "When the food is pure, the mind is pure when the mind is pure, then remembrance (*i.e.*, loving meditation) is firm and when (such) memory is obtained, there is the complete loosening of all knots" (*Ibid* VII 26 2), it is revealed by the *Śruti* that knowledge which is of the form of the direct vision of the *Brahman*, is dependent on purity of food. Therefore, as the (five) great sacrifices and such other daily and occasional rites are required to be performed till one's death solely

850. Sri Śaṅkara explains that this verse applies only to those aspirants for mokṣa who have not yet risen to wisdom.

for the sake of the knowledge of the *Brahman*, the renunciation of those is not proper. Thus, the giving up of the works, which cause the rise of knowledge, under the delusion that they tend to bondage is declared to be characterised by the quality of *tamas*.

Renunciation which is of the quality of *tamas* has its roots in the *tamas*. Such renunciation has its roots in the *tamas*, because it has its roots in the ignorance which is the effect of the *tamas*. For the *tamas* is at the root of ignorance. It has indeed been stated here: "Hoodlessness and delusion spring from the *tamas*, as also ignorance" (XIV 17). But ignorance is perverse knowledge, which is opposed to (correct) knowledge.<sup>851</sup> Accordingly it will be stated "That judgement (O Arjuna (Pārtha), which, enveloped in the *tamas*, regards what is contrary to *dharma* as *dharma* and all things as the opposite of what they are, that is of the quality of *tamas*" (XVIII 32). The meaning therefore is that the renunciation of daily and occasional rites and other works has, indeed, its roots in perverse knowledge.

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्स्यजेत् ।

स कृत्वा राजस त्याग नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥ ८ ॥

8 He who renounces works as troublesome out of fear of physical strain performs renunciation characterised by the *rajas* and does not at all attain the fruit of renunciation.

Even though works form the mediate means for final release, yet they cause depression of the mind,<sup>852</sup> because they can be performed only by gathering materials which is troublesome and because they produce physical strain on account of their requiring much exertion. He who, fearing this, comes to the conclusion that the discipline of knowledge alone should be attempted for success in *yoga* and gives up rites like the great sacrifices appropriate to his order in life, he performs renunciation whose root is in the *rajas*. And because this does not represent the purport of the *sāstras* as it ought to be, he cannot

851. In the commentary on XIV 17, Śrī Rāmānuja explained *moha* as *viparīta-jñāna* and *afjāna* as the absence of *jñāna*. Here, after citing that verse, *afjāna* is glossed as '*viparīta-jñāna*'. T C would reconcile this by suggesting that in the absence of *jñāna*, wrong action can only be the outcome of perverse knowledge.

852. Absence of depression of mind is one of the seven qualities helpful in producing devotion to God. See S B (1, pp 20-21).

obtain the fruit of renunciation in the form of the birth of knowledge (in him) For it will be said later on to this effect. "The judgement by which one understands otherwise than accurately, O Arjuna (Pārtha) is characterised by the *rajas*" (XVIII 31) For works are not the cause of purity of mind in a concrete, visible way, but through the grace of God <sup>853</sup>

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।

सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागस्सात्त्विको मतः ॥ ९ ॥

9 When works that are invariably concomitant (with one's caste and stage in life) are performed, with the feeling that they ought to be carried out and giving up attachment and the fruits also, that renunciation is deemed to be characterised by the quality of *sattva*

When works like daily and occasional rites and the (five) great sacrifices, which are enjoined in the scriptures according to one's caste and stage of life, are performed with the conviction that, on account of their being the worship of Myself, they ought to be performed, they being an end in themselves, and giving up the sense of possession in the works and the fruits, that renunciation is deemed to be characterised by the quality of *sattva* <sup>854</sup> It has its roots in the *sattva* The meaning is that it has its roots in the knowledge of the purport of the *sāstras* as it really is.

For in the passage, "From the *sattva* knowledge is born" (XIV 17), it has been taught that the *sattva* produces knowledge of things as they really are. And it will be stated (further on) "That judgement, O Arjuna (Pārtha) which discerns (the works prescribed for) the active life and (for) the life of renunciation, what ought to be done (in connection therewith) and what ought not to be done, what causes fear and what assures freedom from fear, and what is bondage (in *samsāra*) and what is deliverance (therefrom)—that (judgement) is characterised by the quality of *sattva*" (XVIII 31)

853 T. C. refers to the passage from *Dramida* quoted under S. B. (II 2 3) "The established law of the *śāstras* is that they (the people) desire to please the Self by means of works with the desire to be given the fruits thereof, and He, being pleased (with them), is (alone) capable of giving the fruits"

854 T. C. explains that the essential feature of *sāttvika tyāga* is the giving up of the sense of agency. Śrī Śaṅkara points out that here there is the giving up of the fruits of works, while the *rājasa* and *tāmasa* varieties of *tyāga* relate to the abandonment of works. abandonment or renunciation is the common feature in all the three



न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।

त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो भेषावी ष्छिन्नसंशय ॥ १० ॥

10 One who has renounced, being imbued with the *sattva*, having wisdom and with doubts cut off, neither hates inauspicious works, nor becomes attached to those that are auspicious

One who is thus imbued with the *sattva*, who has wisdom that is, has knowledge of the ultimate reality as it really is, who, because of this, indeed, has his doubts cut off, and who has given up attachment to works and (their) fruits<sup>855</sup> (such a person) neither hates inauspicious works, nor becomes attached to auspicious works. Inauspicious works are productive of undesirable results and auspicious works have for their fruits desirable fruits in the form of *Śvarga*, sons, cows, food etc.

In respect of these two (types of works) which are being performed he entertains neither love nor hatred, because of his being free of the sense of possession<sup>856</sup> because of his having given up all fruits other than the *Brahman* and because of his having given up the sense of agency. Here sinful works that lead to undesirable results, are regarded as arising through inadvertence<sup>857</sup>. For it has been revealed in the scriptures that failure to turn away from evil conduct is opposed to the birth of knowledge. 'But one who has not ceased from evil conduct, is not tranquil, is not distracted, is not content in mind also, will not attain Him by knowledge' (*Kath. Up.* II 24). Therefore, the renunciation which is in accordance with the *śāstras* is the giving up of the sense of agency, attachment and fruits in regard to the works and not the giving up of the works themselves.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks about this

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्मण्यशेषतः ।

यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥ ११ ॥

855 A chain of causes and effects is suggested in the order in which the descriptive epithets in the verse are explained in the commentary ('C')

856 'T' 'C' explains that this means he considers these works as if they were performed by others for themselves.

857 The *sattva-samāvṛtta* comes to perform *akuśala-karma* only through inadvertence. According to Śrī Śaṅkara, *karma-karma* is inauspicious and *nitya-karma* auspicious.

11 For it is not possible for one who is embodied to give up works altogether. But he who has renounced the fruits of works, is said to have renounced.

For it is not possible for one who is embodied, that is, one who is maintaining a body,<sup>858</sup> to give up works altogether, because of eating, drinking and such other acts required for sustaining the body and others connected therewith being unavoidable. And for their sake the performance of the (five) great sacrifices and such other religious rites is also unavoidable. He who has renounced the fruits in regard to the (five) great sacrifices and such other works, he alone is described to be one who has renounced in passages of the *tāstras* like the following "Solely through renunciation do some attain immortality" (*M Nār* X 5).

The reference to one who renounces the fruits of works is illustrative. It must be taken to refer to one who has renounced the fruits, agency and attachment to works, as the discussion of the topic has been begun with the statement, "(*Tyāga*) has been described to be of three kinds" (XVIII 4).

It may, however, be argued that the *agnihotra*, the full moon and new moon sacrifices, the *jyotistoma* and such other works, as also the (five) great sacrifices and similar rites are enjoined by the *tāstras*, only on account of their being connected with fruits like *Śvarga*. Indeed, even the mandate in regard to the daily and occasional rites is laid down on account of their being connected with fruits, as in the following and similar passages "The world of *Prajāpati*s (like *Bhṛgu*) is attained by householders" (*V P* I 6 37)<sup>859</sup>. Therefore, in the performance of works which are made out only as having the nature of being the means for their fruits, connection with agreeable and disagreeable fruits is unavoidable even to one who does not desire the

858 Śrī Śāṅkara interprets 'deha-bhī' as one who confounds the body with the self and argues that the wise seer can give up all *karmas* without exception.

859. This verse is quoted from a context where the various worlds attained by those who discharge well the duties suited to their castes and orders of life are detailed. In *S B*, under III 4 19, some verses of this passage are quoted to show that "those who are devoid of devotion to the *Brahma*n and merely perform their duties according to the stages of life attain auspicious worlds, while among these one who is devoted to the *Brahma*n becomes the enjoyer of 'immortality'."

fruits, just as in the case of sowing the seed and such other (worldly) activities. Therefore, (it is concluded that) works should not be performed by one aspiring for final release, on account of their having fruits opposed to final release.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) replies to such arguments

अनिष्टमिष्ट मिश्र च त्रिविध कर्मण फलम् ।

भवत्यत्यागिना प्रेत्य न तु सन्यासिना क्वचित् ॥ १२ ॥

12 In regard to those who have not renounced (or *atyāgins*), the fruits of works, after their performance (i.e. after death), are threefold—undesirable, desirable and mixed—but never (are there any such fruits) to those who have renounced.

What is undesirable is hell and such other fruits. What is desirable is *Svarga* and such other fruits<sup>860</sup>. When combined with what is undesirable, souls, cows, food and such other fruits (which may by themselves seem desirable) are mixed.

To those who have not renounced—that is, to those who are without the renunciation of the agency, sense of possession and fruits, threefold are these fruits of work after death. The meaning of “after death” (*pretya*) may be taken to ‘be in the time which is posterior to the performance of works’. But never to those who have renounced that, i.e., to those who have renounced the sense of agency etc., never are there any fruits opposed to final release.

What is said amounts to this. Though the *agnihotra*, the (five) great sacrifices and similarities are indeed obligatory, still as in the case of the difference in their applications in regard to their suitability (for performance) throughout life and their suitability (for performance) for winning the objects of desire, there is also difference in application in regard to their suitability (for performance) for final release. Thus (the objection) is overcome. And their application for final release may be seen in passages like “The Brāhmaṇas desire to know Him

860. According to Śrī Śaṅkara, birth as a god, as an animal or in hell, and as a human being constitute respectively the desirable, undesirable and mixed fruits of works.

who has been mentioned above, by sacrifices, by giving gifts and by austerities associated with fasting" (*Bṛh Up* IV. 4. 22).<sup>861</sup>

Thus, *sannyāsa* is the renunciation of such things as agency, as shown in the *śāstras*, in respect of works that are being performed. This alone has been spoken of as *tyāga*.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now teaches the method of realising that one is not an agent, by ascribing all agency to the Lord, who is the Supreme Person and the Internal Ruler. It is only from this that there arises the giving up of the sense of possession even in regard to results and works. For the Supreme Person, it is well known, takes up all activities having His sport as the only purpose,<sup>862</sup> through the individual self which belongs to Him and with the help of organs, bodies, and life sustaining forces which also belong to Him.<sup>863</sup> Accordingly, even the satisfaction of hunger and such other results belonging to the individual self and the actions which form the means therefor, are the Supreme Person's only

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।

साध्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ १३ ॥

13 Learn from Me, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), these five causes which are held in the reasoned conclusions (of the Vedas) to be responsible for producing all works

'*Saṁkhyā*' is the reasoning faculty. In the demonstrated conclusions arising from the functioning of reasoning (*saṁkhye kṛtānte*),<sup>864</sup>

861 It is accepted that rituals like the *agnihotra* may be performed with a double purpose. They are daily duties and also the means for winning *svarga*. Similarly these can be performed by those seeking final release as both the duties of their stages of life and as auxiliary means for final release. See *S B* (III. 4 32-35).

862 *T C*. refers to another reading, '*likādi prajayjanāya*' for the purposes of sport, etc.

863. Just as a bird in a cage is fed and kept happy for the satisfaction of the king whose pet it is, men satisfy their hunger only for the pleasure of the Lord for whose benefit alone they live and labour (*T C*).

864. *T C* explains that the phrase ultimately means that portion of the Vedas embodying such conclusions. '*Saṁkhye kṛtānte*' is interpreted by Śrī Śaṅkara 'as in the Vedānta in which all things to be known are enumerated (*saṁkhyāntānte*) and all actions (*karma*) find their cessation (*anta*)'. Śrī Madhva takes it to mean 'in the *yājño-vidhānta*', in the *śāstra* which is intended for giving rise to true knowledge.

that is, in the conclusions arrived at after deliberation by an intelligence working, in harmony with the *Vedas*, on the nature of things as they are, these five causes are held to be responsible for the *siddhā*, that is, the production of all works. Learn them from Me. That is, ascertain them from Me.

An intelligence working in harmony with the *Vedas*, concludes indeed that the Supreme Self, who has for His instruments the body, the senses, the life-sustaining forces and the individual self, is alone the agent of all actions, as declared in the following and other *Śruti* texts "He who, dwelling in the self, is within the self, whom the self does not know, whose body is the self, who rules the self from within, He is your Self, the Inner Ruler immortal." (*Mādh. Brh. Up.* III 7 22), and "He who has entered within, is the ruler of all things that are born and is the Self of all" (*Taitt. Ar.* III 21).

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now mentions here that (conclusion of the *Śruti* texts)

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।

विविधा च पृथक्चेष्टा देवैर्वात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ १४ ॥

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।

न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥ १५ ॥

14 The seat of action as also the agent and organs of many kinds, the manifold and distinctively functioning vital airs (of distinct activities) and also Providence forming the fifth of these

15 Whatever, work a man starts to do with body, speech, and mind, whether it is right or wrong, these five are its causes

These five are the causes in respect of every work done by the body, speech or mind, whether it is right, that is, in accordance with the *sāstras*, or wrong, that is, forbidden<sup>865</sup>. The seat of action

865. According to Śrī Śaṅkara, *adhiṣṭhānaṁ* is the body, *kaṛaṇam* stands for the ten senses with *manas* and *buddhi*, the agent is the individual self, the activities of the vital airs are the *cheṣṭāḥ*, and the sun and other divinities who help the senses like that of vision are meant by '*dairavaṇi*'. Śrī Madhva says that the agent is Viṣṇu or the soul dependent on Him. '*Cheṣṭāḥ*' stands for the activities of hands, etc. *Dairavaṇi* is destiny if Viṣṇu is the agent and Viṣṇu if the individual self is the agent.

(*ādhisṭhānam*) is the body. The body, which is made of a combination of the 'great elements', is called the seat, because it is presided over by the individual self

And the agent is the individual self. That this individual self is the knower and the agent is taught in the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, in the following aphorisms "It (i.e., the individual self) is the knower itself, because of them (i.e., because of there being scriptural statements to that effect)" (II 3 19) and "The agent of actions is (the individual self), because the scriptural injunctions have to be purposive" (II 3 33)

The organs of many kinds are the five organs of action like that of speech, hands, feet etc., along with the mind <sup>866</sup>. They are of many kinds, that is, they have different functions in the carrying out of work. And as regards the manifold and distinctive activities, it may be noted that the five fold vital air is meant by the expression, 'activity' (*śreyā*), which directly denotes its functions. Distinctive are the activities, various are the functions of this vital air, which supports the body and the senses, which is divided into different things like the *prāṇa*, the *apāna* and others and which is fivefold <sup>867</sup>.

Providence forms the fifth of these. The meaning is this. Of these, which form the collection of causes for work, Providence is the fifth. That is, the Supreme Self, who is the internal ruler, is the principal cause in the carrying out of work.

It has been declared already. "And I am well established in the hearts of all. From Me (come) memory, knowledge, and their loss also", (XV 15). And He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will say later on "The Lord dwells O Arjuna, in the region of heart of all beings, causing all beings who are mounted on the machine (of the body) to revolve (i.e., to work) by means of the *prakṛti* (or *māyā*) (which is under His control and in accordance with its *guṇas*)" (XVIII. 61). That the agency of the individual self is dependent on the Supreme Self is also taught in the

<sup>866</sup> T. C. explains that the self has to be the knower—and not mere knowledge—if he is to be the agent. Since this context deals with action, only the organs of action are mentioned here as the self's instruments. The mind is also included, as its willing is needed for action to take place.

<sup>867</sup> As activity cannot be the cause of activity, 'śreyā' has to be understood in a secondary sense as the vital air which impel movements of various kinds in the body. The different functions of the five vital airs are listed in Note 758 under XV. 14.

following aphorism (of the *Vedānta Sūtras*) "That (i.e., the power of being the agent possessed by the individual self) is, however, from the Supreme Being because the scripture says so" (II 3 40).

The question may be raised that, if the agency of the individual self is dependent on the Supreme Self, then the *tāndras*, relating to mandates and prohibitions become purposeless, as the individual self becomes incapable of being made subject to mandates in regard to any work. This question is satisfactorily answered by the author of the *Vedānta Sūtras* himself (in the aphorism), "But He requires the efforts made (by the individual self) for the reason among others that the mandates and prohibitions (in the *tāndras*) should not become purposeless" (II 3 41) <sup>868</sup>

What is said amounts to this. By means of the senses, the body and such other things given by the Supreme Self, having Him for their support and deriving their power from Him, the individual self, who finds his support in Him and derives his power from Him, undertakes, of his own free will, the effort, which is of the form of directing the senses and other things, for the purpose of performing work. The individual self himself of his own free will is indeed the cause of work, because the Supreme Self, remaining within him, causes him (who has made the effort) to act by granting His permission <sup>869</sup>. As in the case of the activities which have for their object such things as the shifting of very heavy stones, trees and similar things that can be brought about (only) by many persons, the condition of being the cause may belong to many, as also that of being subject to positive and negative commandments.

तत्रैव सति कर्तारमात्मान केवल तु य ।

पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वाच्च स पश्यति दुर्मति ॥ १६ ॥

<sup>868</sup> The other reasons are that there may be scope for the Lord to show His grace and scope also to indicate His disapproval.

<sup>869</sup> The reality of moral choice is affirmed on the basis of the initial effort of the individual self being entirely free, the Lord remaining neutral. Later efforts are assented to by Him, so that they may be carried into effect. In details regarding this, differences of opinion have arisen between the southern and northern schools among the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja. The latter does not accept the Lord's neutrality during the initial effort, He being the common cause of all actions and the selves the particular causes. See *S. P* on *S. B* (II 3. 41), Vātsya Varada's *Tattvasāra* (46), and Vedānta Deśika's *Adhikaranasāra* (236-243), as also the *T. C.* here.

16 *Such being the case, in regard to it (i.e., action), he who sees the self alone and none else as the agent, that man of perverse mind does not see, because of his having an undisciplined understanding*

While the agency of the individual self requires the previous assent of the Supreme Self, he who sees, in regard to it, that is, in respect of work, the individual self alone and none else<sup>870</sup> as the agent, that man of a wicked mind, that is, of a perverse mind, does not see, that is, does not see the agent as he really is, because of his having an undisciplined understanding, that is, an understanding to which the nature of things as they are has not been made known

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

हृत्वापि स इमांल्लोकान् हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ १७ ॥

17 *He who has no feeling of egoism and whose understanding is not tainted (by attachment)—even though he kills all these men, he kills not, nor is bound (by the consequences of the action).*

He who has no feelings of egoism, that is, the attitude of whose mind about agency, as a result of meditation of the agency of the Supreme Person, does not proceed from self-esteem, the meaning being that the idea, "I alone do", does not exist for him and whose understanding is not tainted, that is, whose understanding has arrived at the conclusion, 'As there is no agency for me in respect of this work, its fruit is not connected with me, nor does the work belong to me' such a man, even though he kills in battle all these men, that is, not merely Bhīṣma and other such (venerated elders) (but all others also), does not kill them.<sup>871</sup> Hence he is not bound by this work known as fighting in war. The meaning is that he does not experience the consequences of this work

870. Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'ātmānaḥ kevalaḥ' as referring to the pure state of the Self and sets out his view that the Self can never be the agent either by Itself or in combination with others. Śrī Madhva glosses 'kevalaḥ' as 'apātriyāḥ' 'or devoid of action (unless impelled by the Lord)'.

871. Śrī Śaṅkara argues that the Self, having no agency in regard to the act of killing, cannot become connected with the evil consequences of the killing. The wise, who know this, give up all actions. This, in his view, sums up the teaching of the Gītā and is the essence of the purport of all the Vedas.



He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to describe the manner in which work is impelled, elaborating the differences created in work by the *sattva* and other *gunas* with a view to teach the desirability of the *sattva*, because all this meditation on one's self not being the agent and such other things leads only to the increase of the *sattva* *gunas*.<sup>872</sup>

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मबोधना ।

करण कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविध. कर्मसंग्रहः ॥ १८ ॥

18 Knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knowing subject these form the triple incitement to action. Threefold is action in concise description as the instrument, the action and the agent.

Knowledge (here) is the knowledge about the work that ought to be done. And the object of knowledge is the work that ought to be done. The knower is he who understands it. In this way, triple is the incitement to action. The meaning is that the mandate relating to rites like the *gyotistoma* are associated with knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower. Therein, the work which constitutes the object of knowledge is concisely described as threefold, as the instrument, the action and the agent. The instrument consists of the materials and other things which constitute the means. The action is the sacrifice etc. The agent is one who performs the action.

ज्ञान कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिवेद गुणमेदतः ।

प्रोच्यते गुणसख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥ १९ ॥

19 Knowledge, action and the agent—in the context which enumerates the (effects of the) *gunas*, each of these is said to be of three kinds according to the differences of the *gunas*. Hear about them also as they are.

In the context which enumerates the *gunas*,<sup>873</sup> that is, in recounting the effects of the *gunas*, knowledge about the work that ought

872. The analysis of action described hereunder is only for the purpose of elaborating the divisions of things relating thereto, according to the *gunas* (T. C.)

873. Śrī Śaṅkara distinctly says that the Sākhya system of Kapila is meant here, and that it is acceptable with reference to the subject under discussion. Śrī Mādhva glosses, 'in the context of describing the *gunas*': but according to the explanation given by Jayatīrtha, this has to be understood as a reference to Kapila's Sākhya system.

to be done, the work that is being done, and the performer of that work are stated to be of three kinds, according to the differences based on the *sattva* and other *gunas*. Hear about these also as they are. That is, hear about these, knowledge and the other things, which are differentiated according to the *gunas*.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्त विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २० ॥

20. Know that knowledge to be characterised by the quality of *sattva* by which one sees the same indestructible entity as undivided in all embodied beings that are divided.

By that knowledge by which one sees the same entity<sup>874</sup> in all embodied beings who are qualified to perform religious rites and who are divided in the forms of the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, students, householders etc., and even among them (sees it) as undivided, that is, as something devoid of distinctions in respect of the self in its form as knowledge,<sup>875</sup> among all embodied beings in the forms of Brāhmaṇas and others, possessed of the distinctions of being white, long etc., as indestructible, that is, as indestructible even in the bodies of Brāhmaṇas and others that are of a perishable nature, as immutable and as unfit for association with the fruits and such other things (sees the self in this manner) at the time of being qualified for works<sup>876</sup>—know that knowledge to be characterised by the quality of *sattva*.

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावात् पृथग्विधान् ।

वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 But that knowledge which knows through differentiation in all embodied beings various entities of different kinds, know that knowledge to be characterised by the quality of *rajas*.

874. Śrī Śaṅkara says that this is the one and only Self of monism God (Viṣṇu) is the one thing to be known mentioned in this verse, according to Śrī Maṇḍya.

875. The point here is that all individual selves, being of the form of knowledge, are similar to one another. The single entity refers to the class of selves.

876. That is, at the time of taking up the performance of works.

That knowledge which knows at the time of being qualified for works even the entities known as the selves in all embodied beings, (in Brāhmaṇas and others, as varied through differentiation in the forms of Brāhmaṇas and others, and as being of different kinds, on account of the distinctions of being white, long and so on,<sup>877</sup> and as fit to be associated with the fruits and other things related to work—know that knowledge to be characterised by the quality of *tamas* <sup>878</sup>

यत् कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तमहेतुकम् ।

अतस्त्वार्यवदस्य च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २२ ॥

22 But that (knowledge) is declared to be characterised by the *tamas* which is attached unreasonably to a single (finite) work as if it were all, which is concerned with what is not the true significance of things and which is insignificant

But that knowledge which is attached to a single work,<sup>879</sup> as if it were a repository of all fruits, and unreasonably,<sup>880</sup> that is, having as a matter of fact no cause for such attachment, in view of its not being a repository of all fruits (which is attached to) a single (finite) work which has to be done which is in the form of the worship of ghosts or evil spirits, which yields very insignificant fruits, which is concerned with what is not the true significance of things, that is, which is concerned with a wrong view about things, on account of associating the self with differentiation, as previously, which (not merely) yields poor results, (but) is (also) by itself insignificant on account of having ghosts, evil spirits and such others as objects of worship—that knowledge is declared to be characterised by the *tamas*

877. There are three expressions indicating plurality in this verse—'prithak', 'nāna' and 'prithakvidha'. T. C. explains that they refer respectively to distinctions of class, those of the substantive which here is the self and those of attributes. The selves are many—the bodies in which they dwell are divisible according to castes or orders of life, and can also be differentiated according as they are fair or dark, tall or short, and so on.

878. Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that dualistic systems are condemned in this verse and the next.

879. Śrī Śaṅkara takes 'kārya' in the verse to stand for a body or an idol. He sees here a reference to the creeds of Jains and others who look upon the soul as of the size of the body, and of gross idolaters and fetish worshippers to whom God is no more than a stone or a piece of wood.

880. T. C. refers to a reading 'akṣitukam' for 'akṣitukam' in the verse.

After having, in this manner, spoken about the triple division, according to the *guṇas*, of the knowledge about the work to be performed, viewed in relation to its aspect<sup>881</sup> consisting of the person qualified for work at the time of having the qualification for the work, He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak about the triple division, according to the *guṇas*, of the work that has to be carried out

नियत सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥ २३ ॥

23. That work is said to be characterised by the *sattva* which is obligatory, devoid of attachment and is carried out without desire or aversion by one who does not long for its fruits

That which is obligatory, that is, is appropriate to one's caste and stage of life is devoid of attachment, that is, is devoid of attachment such as that of agency and is carried out without desire or aversion, that is, is not performed through desire for fame and aversion from ill fame, or, in other words, is performed without ostentation and is performed by one who does not long for its fruits, that is, by one who does not aim at obtaining the fruits and is actuated by the conviction that it ought to be done—that (work) is said to be characterised by the *sattva*

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।

क्रियते बहुलायास तत्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २४ ॥

24. That work is said to be characterised by the *rajas* which is done with a great deal of exertion by one who longs for a desired object and has egoism

But whatever, that is, whatever work is done by one longing for a desired object, that is, by one who longs for the fruits of his work, and who has egoism, that is, has the mistaken idea of being the agent—'vā' is used here in the sense of 'and' (*cha*)—and with a great deal of exertion, that is characterised by the *rajas*. The mean-

881. When work is looked upon as a substantive with attributes, the performer of the work becomes an attribute of the work. The division of the work made in the three previous stanzas refers to the ways in which the performers of work are regarded by various kinds of agents with varied kinds of knowledge.

ing is that whatever work is done by one who is actuated by the mistaken idea, 'This work which requires a great deal of exertion, is being done by me only,'—that is characterised by the *rajas*

अनुबन्ध क्षय हिंसा मनवेक्ष्य च पीरुषम् ।

मोहादारम्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥ २५ ॥

25 That action is said to be characterised by the *tamas* which is begun through delusion, without regard to consequences, loss, injury (to others) and one's own competence

The consequences refer to the pain which follows from the work done. Loss is the destruction of wealth while the work is being carried out. Injury is the affliction caused to living creatures in it. Competence is the ability to finish the work. Whatever work is begun without regard to,<sup>882</sup> that is, without taking into consideration all these, from delusion, that is, from ignorance about the agency of the Supreme Person—that (work) is said to be characterised by the *tamas*

मुक्तसङ्गो जहवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।

सिद्धयसिद्धयोर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ २६ ॥

26 That agent is said to be of the quality of *sattva*, who is free from attachment, who is not given to speaking about himself, who is endowed with a firm resolve and enthusiasm, and who is not moved by success and failure

One who is free from attachment is one who has no attachment to fruits. He is not given to speaking about himself, that is, he is devoid of the mistaken feeling of being the agent. He is endowed with a firm resolve and enthusiasm. Firm resolve is enduring, in respect of a work that has been begun, the pain which cannot be avoided till the work is completed. Enthusiasm is the possession of a zealous mind.

One who is endowed with these, and who is not moved by success and failure,<sup>883</sup> that is, whose mind is not agitated by success

882. Śrī Śaṅkara reads 'anapekṣya', while Śrī Rāmanuja has 'anapekṣya

883. Because he is prompted to act only through the authority of the *śāstras* (Śrī Śaṅkara).

or failure in war and such other works, and in such activities that are instrumental thereto as the gathering of materials and so on

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।

हर्षशोकान्वित कर्ता राजस परिकीर्तितः ॥ २७ ॥

27 *The agent is declared to be characterised by the rajas, who is swayed by desire, who yearns for the results of his works, who is covetous, who causes harm (to others), who is impure and who is subject to joy and sorrow*

The agent who is swayed by desire, that is, is in quest of fame who longs for the fruits of work, that is, who seeks for the fruits of work, who is covetous, that is, is devoid of the tendency to spend the wealth requisite for the work who causes harm, that is, who afflicts others and causes work to be done by them who is impure, that is, is devoid of the purity needed for the work<sup>884</sup> and who is subject to joy and sorrow, that is, who in war and such other works becomes filled with joy and sorrow on account of success and failure in respect of victory and such other results—such an agent is declared to be characterised by the *rajas*

अयुक्त प्राकृत स्तब्धश्छो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।

विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥ २८ ॥

28 *The agent who is unfit (for religious works), unrefined, indifferent, depraved, dishonest, indisposed to exertion, dejected, and given over to long meditation (of evil deeds), is said to be characterised by the tamas*

The agent who is unfit, that is, who is unfit for works enjoined by the *śāstras*, and is engaged in perverse works, who is unrefined, that is, is not educated in the *śāstras*, who is indifferent, that is, not inclined to take up the performance of works, who is depraved, that is, whose taste is for black magic and such unholy rites; who is dishonest, that is, is full of treachery, who is indisposed to exertion, that is, is tardy in carrying out even works already undertaken, who

<sup>884</sup> The purity which makes one fit to be seen or touched cannot, by itself merely, constitute fitness for the performance of religious works (T. C.)

is dejected, that is, is of a tendency to be very depressed,<sup>885</sup> and who is given over to long meditation,<sup>886</sup> that is, who, while engaged in black magic and such other acts, is given over to long continued thought of bringing about harm to others—the agent who is of this kind is characterised by the *tamas*.

Thus, the threefold division, based on the *gunas*, has been described in respect of the knowledge relating to the work that ought to be performed, of the work that ought to be performed and of the agent. Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak about the threefold division, based on the *gunas*, of the judgement, which is of the form of settled conclusions with regard to all the ultimate principles and all the ends of human life,<sup>887</sup> and that of the will.

बुद्धेर्भेद घृतेर्धैव गुणतस्त्रिविध शृणु ।

प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥ २९ ॥

29 Listen (now), O Arjuna (Dhananjaya), to the threefold classification, according to the *gunas*, of the judgement and the will, which is being described completely and distinctly.

Judgement is knowledge which is in the form of settled conclusions, based on discrimination. The will is the determination to adhere to a work undertaken, even if obstacles arise. Listen (now) to the threefold classification, based on the *sattva* and other *gunas*, of these two, which is being described distinctly and truly.

885 'Depression' is here expressed by Śrī Rāmānuja, using the term, '*anavastha*'. This recalls the definition of '*anavastha*' by the Vākyakāra, quoted in the *Laghuvaddhānta* section of *S B* (I 1 1), in the context where steady meditation is shown to be the outcome of discrimination and six other qualities, one of which is *anavastha*. The Vākyakāra says: "*Anavastha* is the lustrelessness of the mind, due to the melancholy which is born out of the untowardness of time and place, and the recollection of sorrowful things, etc."

886 '*Dirgha-sūtra*' is generally understood as one who takes a long time to do a work. Probably, the word literally means 'one who has, or rather spins a long yarn'. *T C* justifies Śrī Rāmānuja's interpretation by deriving the word from the root, '*sūtra*', in the sense of 'to think or meditate'. Śrī Madhva gives an explanation which comes very near to this. He says that a *dirgha-sūtra* is one who goes on indicating for a long time and unnecessarily the faults of others. The usual meaning of a procrastinator is given by Śrī Śaṅkara.

887 This is how *buddhi* is distinguished from *jñāna* as knowledge of a determinative kind which arises from the study of the *sūtras* prior to the time of performance of works and which forms the cause for the knowledge (and mental attitude) at the time of performance. Śrī Śaṅkara, however, takes *jñāna* as a function (*Vṛtti*) of *buddhi*.

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।

बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिस्सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३० ॥

30 That judgement, O Arjuna (Pārtha) which discerns (the works prescribed for) the active life and (for) the life of renunciation, what ought to be done (in connection therewith) and what ought not to be done, what causes fear and what assures freedom from fear, and what is bondage (in *samsāra*) and what is deliverance (therefrom)—that (judgement) is characterised by the *sattva*

By the active life is meant the ritual and conduct which constitute the means for worldly prosperity By the life of renunciation is meant that which constitutes the means for final release That judgement which discerns both these as they are which knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, that is, (knows) in respect of persons of all castes, who are devoted to one or other of the duties of active life and of the life of renunciation, having regard to particular places, times and circumstances, "This is what ought to be done and this is what ought not to be done", (which knows) fear, that is, the transgression of the *sāstras* as the cause of fear, and obedience to them as the cause of freedom from fear <sup>888</sup> and which knows bondage and deliverance, that is, the true nature of *samsāra* and the true nature of getting out therefrom —that judgement (which comprehends all these) is characterised by the *sattva*

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।

अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिस्सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३१ ॥

31 That judgement by which one understands otherwise than accurately duty and that which is the antithesis of duty, and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, is characterised by the *rajas*, O Arjuna (Pārtha)

That judgement by which one does not understand accurately the two kinds of duties<sup>889</sup> previously mentioned and what is contrary

888 'Bhaya' is here understood as that which causes fear and 'abhaya' as that which assures freedom from fear To the knowers of truth only the Lord can be the source of both fear and freedom from fear Hence the explanation that fear is caused by violation of His commandments and freedom from fear assured by obeying them (T C).

889 'Dharma' is here taken as the means for securing steady adherence to the active life or the life of renunciation (T C)



thereto, as also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done by those devoted to them in different places, times and circumstances that (judgement) is characterised by the *rājas*

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसाऽऽवृता ।

सर्वार्थान्विपरीताश्च बुद्धिस्सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२ ॥

32 That judgement, O Arjuna (Pārtha), which, enveloped in the *tamas*, regards what is contrary to duty as duty and all things as the opposite of what they are, that is of the quality of *tamas*

But the judgement which is of the quality of *tamas*, being enveloped in the *tamas*, regards all things as the opposite of what they are. The meaning is that it regards what is contrary to duty as duty and duty as the opposite of duty, the thing which is existing as non-existent and the non-existing thing as existent, the higher principle as the lower and the lower principle as the higher, and thus everything as the opposite of what it is <sup>890</sup>

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रिया ।

योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिस्सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३३ ॥

33 That will by which one maintains unswerving (from their objectives) the work of the mind, the physiological work of life and the work of the senses, that have been prompted by (i.e., so as to subserve) devotion (to the Lord)—that will, O Arjuna (Pārtha), is of the quality of *sattva*

That will<sup>891</sup> by which, prompted by devotion, one maintains unswerving the work of the mind, the physiological work of life and the work of the senses (is said to be of the quality of *sattva*) Devotion (*yoga*) is the worship of the Lord which forms the means for the attainment of final release. The meaning is that the will by which,

890 While the *rājas* judgement misapprehends attributes, the *tāmas* judgement mistakes the very ground in which the attributes inhere. An example of *rājas* judgement is to regard a white conch as yellow. When the mother-of-pearl is mistaken as silver, we have a case of *tāmas* judgement (T C)

891 The will is defined by T C. as a particular manifestation of the *buddhi*, as revealed in firmness of resolution, etc. Sri Śaṅkara considers it to be a particular function of *buddhi*.

through devotion which has become an end, one maintains unwavering<sup>892</sup> the activities of the mind and others that have been begun in order to attain devotion and that constitute the means therefor, is characterised by the *sattva*.

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।

प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिस्सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३४ ॥

34 But that will, O Arjuna (Pārtha), with which one who longs for fruits through intense attachment adheres to righteousness, the satisfaction of desires and the pursuit of wealth—that will is of the quality of *rajas*

That will by which a person who longs for fruits through intense attachment<sup>893</sup> adheres to righteousness, the satisfaction of desires and the pursuit of wealth<sup>894</sup> is of the quality of *rajas*. By the expression, 'dharmārthakāṁṣa' (righteousness, objects of desire and wealth), the work of the mind, the physiological work of life and the work of the senses which constitute the means therefor, are indicated. Even in regard to (the expression), 'one who longs for fruits', by the word, 'fruits' (therein), nothing other than righteousness, objects of desire and wealth are meant to be spoken about, as he is of the quality of *rajas*.

Hence what is said amounts to this. The will by which one sustains the activities of the mind and other such things, with a view to pursue righteousness, the satisfaction of desires and wealth, is of the quality of *rajas*.

यया स्वप्नं भय शोक विषाद मदमेव च ।

न विमुञ्चति कुर्मेषा धृतिस्सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३५ ॥

892 'Aryabāhāranga' is taken by Śrī Rāmānuja as linked to 'manas-  
prāṇendriyabridhā'. Śrī Śaṅkara regards the word as being in instrumental  
singular and qualifying 'dārya'.

893 'Prasāṅga' which is here understood as 'through intense attachment',  
is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara as meaning 'as the occasion may indicate'.

894. Righteousness, satisfaction of desires and wealth, together with salvation,  
constitute the four ends of human life.

35 *The will by which one of perverse mind refuses to give up sleep, (what causes) fear, (what brings on) grief, (what gives rise to) dejection, and the intoxication of passion, is characterised, O Arjuna (Pārtha), by the quality of tamas*

The will by which one of perverse mind refuses to give up, that is holds fast to *svapna* or sleep, and the intoxication of passion, that is the intoxication produced by the enjoyment of sense objects, or, in other words, (holds fast to) the work of the mind, the physiological work of life and other such activities directed towards sleep and the intoxication of passion—(that will is characterised by the *tamas*) And the words, 'fear', 'grief' and 'dejection', relate to the objects causing fear, grief and such other feelings. That will by which one sustains the work of the mind, the physiological work of life and such other activities which constitute the means for these (i.e., fear, grief and dejection), is characterised by the *tamas*

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।

36 *Now hear from Me, O Arjuna (Bharatarṣabha), about the triple (classification of) pleasure*

Now (when the time has come for enquiry about differences in the objectives to be attached), hear about the pleasure in relation to which the knowledge, action, agent etc already mentioned are all subservient, and which is of three kinds according to the *gunas*

अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥ ३६ ॥

36 *That (pleasure) in which one comes to enjoy through practice and in which one reaches the end of pain.*

That pleasure (is of the quality of *satva*) in which one, through practice extending over a long period, gradually comes to attain a joy to which there is no superior and reaches the end of pain, that is, reaches the end of all misery born of *saṁsāra*.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa further) describes the same (well-known pleasure):

यस्य ह्यग्रे विषमिह परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।

तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादनम् ॥ ३७ ॥

37 Which is like poison at the beginning and is comparable to nectar at the culmination and which arises from the tranquil state of the mind concentrating on the self—that pleasure is said to be characterised by the *sattva*

That pleasure, which at the beginning, at the time of starting *yoga*, is like poison, that is, seems like pain on account of its requiring great efforts for its attainment, and also on account of the nature (of the self) in separation (from the *prakṛti*) never having been experienced which at the culmination, that is, at the time of yielding results, when, by the strength of practice, there is the manifestation of the essential nature (of the self) in separation, becomes like nectar—that (pleasure) is born of the tranquil state of mind concentrating on the self

The intellect having the self for its subject is *ātmabuddhi*. Its tranquil state (*prasaṁbha*) is its being withdrawn from all other subjects. The pleasure which is born of the experience of the self in its distinct nature with the help of an intellect withdrawn from all other subjects becomes like nectar<sup>895</sup>. That pleasure is said to be characterised by the *sattva*

विषयेन्द्रियसयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।

परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥

38. That which at the beginning is like nectar on account of the union of the sense-objects with the senses and which at the culmination is like poison, that pleasure is said to be of the quality of *rajas*

That which at the beginning, that is, at the time of experience, becomes like nectar on account of the union of the sense-objects with the senses, and at the culmination, at the time of yielding results when the causes such as hunger which make the sense-objects yield pleasure,<sup>896</sup> are no longer present, becomes like poison that has been

895 This pleasure is like nectar because it saves one (in due course) from the recurring cycle of birth, old age and death, and because it is so enjoyable that it cannot be given up (*T C*). Śrī Saṅkara explains that this pleasure may be taken as arising from the purity of one's *buddhi*, or from the tranquillity of a mind having the Self for its subject or support.

896 *T C* quotes *V P* (I 17 60, 68) to show that specific conditions are required for sense-objects yielding pleasure—for example, the presence of thirst or hunger for getting pleasure from water or food, of cold weather for getting pleasure from a fire and so on

drunk for the reason that this pleasure leads to hell and such other miseries—that pleasure is said to be characterised by the *rajas*

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुख मोहनमात्मनः ।

निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ ३९ ॥

39 *That pleasure which at the beginning and in its consequences causes delusion to oneself and which springs out of sleep, sloth and heedlessness—that is declared to be characterised by the tamas*

That pleasure which, at the beginning and in its consequences, that is, at the time of experience and when yielding fruits, is deluding, that is, becomes the cause of delusion to oneself—(that pleasure is of the quality of *tamas*) Delusion here means the absence of knowledge of things as they are

This pleasure springs out of sleep, sloth and heedlessness. It is caused by sleep, sloth and heedlessness. It is well known that such states as sleep are the causes of delusion even at the time of experience. That sleep is the cause of delusion is clearly seen. Sloth is sluggishness in the activity of the senses. When the activity of the senses is sluggish, faintness and narrowness of knowledge certainly result. Because heedlessness is lack of attention to what ought to be done, even here there are faintness and narrowness of knowledge. And therefore these two also are such as to cause delusion.<sup>897</sup>

This pleasure (described above) is declared to be of quality of *tamas*

Therefore what is said amounts to this. The *sattva* alone, overcoming the *rajas* the *tamas*, should be preferred by one who seeks final release

न तदस्ति पृथिव्या वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुन ।

सत्त्व प्रकृतिर्जमुक्त यदेमिस्स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥ ४० ॥

40 *There is no creature born on the earth nor among the gods in heaven which is free from these three gunas born of the prakṛti*

<sup>897</sup> Faintness or dimness of knowledge leads ultimately to absolute ignorance (T C)

There is no *sattva*, that is, no creature born,<sup>398</sup> which is free of these three *guṇas* of the *prakṛti*, either among men and others on the earth or among the gods in heaven, that is, among all that are in association with the *prakṛti* from Brahmā (the creator) down to immovable things.

It has been taught that the *tyāga* which has been described as constituting the means for the attainment of final release in passages (of the *Śruti*) like "Solely through *tyāga* do some of them attain immortality" (*M Nār X 21*), is not other than what is meant by the word, 'sannyāsa' and that it has its roots in the giving up of agency in works actually being performed, and that the giving up of the fruits and of (the sense of possessiveness in) works and the giving up of agency are to be practised through attributing the agency (of all actions) to the Supreme Person. As all these are the effects of the increase of the *sattva-guṇa*, the differences of the effects of the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas* have been described at length in order to teach that the *sattva* is worthy of being acquired.

Now He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) proceeds to speak about the nature of the works that ought to be done, along with the avocations, as differentiated by the differences due to the *sattva* and other *guṇas* arising from the previous *karmas* of the Brahmins and others qualified for their performance, in order to show that such works (when characterised by the threefold renunciation and) when performed as the means for the attainment of final release, are of the form of worship of the Supreme Person and that the fruit of the works thus carried out is known as attaining Him.

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परतप ।

कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रवर्तुणैः ॥ ४१ ॥

41 The duties of the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, as also of the Śūdras, are divided, O Arjuna (Parantapa), in accordance with the *guṇas* arising (as dominant) from their innate dispositions.

The dispositions belonging peculiarly to the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas are their innate dispositions. The meaning is that their old *karmas* constitute the causes for their being born as Brahmins

398. 'Sattva' is rendered by Śrī Rāmānuja as 'prāṇ-jātuk' which may be taken as 'creature born' or as 'species or class of creatures' (T C)

and others. The *sattva* and other *gunas* arise (as dominant) from these (old *karmas*). The *sattva guna* arises (as dominant) from the innate disposition of the Brahmin, having become exalted through prevailing over the *rajas* and the *tamas*. The *rajoguna* arises (as dominant) from the innate disposition of the Kṣatriya, having become exalted by prevailing over the *sattva* and the *tamas*. That which arises (as dominant) from the innate disposition of the Vaiśya is the *tamoguna*, having become exalted in a small degree by prevailing over the *sattva* and the *rajas*. But that which arises (as dominant) from the innate disposition of the Śūdra is the *tamoguna*, having become greatly exalted by prevailing over the *sattva* and the *rajas*.

The duties assigned to them, along with these *gunas* arising (as dominant) from the innate disposition,<sup>899</sup> are taught by the *śāstras* as (thus) apportioned. For the *śāstras* teach that the Brahmins and others are of such and such qualities, that these are their duties<sup>900</sup> and these their avocations (dividing duties and avocations in this manner).

शमो दमस्तपश्शौच क्षान्तिराज्वमेव च ।

ज्ञान विज्ञानमास्तिक्य ब्राह्म कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४२ ॥

42 Control of the senses, control of the mind, austerities, purity, forbearance as also rectitude, knowledge (of what is higher and lower), comprehension of particulars (about the extraordinary qualities of the Lord), faith (in God and religion)—all this is the duty of the Brahmin derived from his innate disposition.

*Śama* is controlling the external organs of sense. *Dama* is controlling the mind (*antaḥkarana*). *Tapas* (austerities) is disciplining the body by way of restricting enjoyments as taught in the *śāstras*. Purity is fitness for carrying out the rituals enjoined by the *śāstras*. Forbearance is the freedom of the mind from agitation of one who is being injured by others. Rectitude is the manifestation towards others

899 Śrī Śaṅkara interprets 'śābhisaprabhavaḥ' in three ways (i) 'by those, born of the *prakṛti* which is the *śābhis* of *īvara*', (ii) 'by those from which are born the innate dispositions', and (iii) 'by those born of the innate impressions of the actions of previous births seeking to manifest themselves'.

900 'Karmāṇi' here stands for the duties and rituals appropriate to one's caste and stage of life.

of such external behaviour as is in consonance with one's own mind Knowledge is the knowledge about the real nature of the superior principle and the inferior principles *Vijñāna* is knowledge relating to the distinctive attributes which belong uniquely to the Supreme Reality Faith (*āstikya*) is the firm conviction in the truth of all thing taught in the *Vedas*. The meaning is that it cannot be shaken by any reason whatever.

*Āstikya* is firm conviction in this truth which is to the following effect. The Lord Vāsudeva who is the Highest Person is denoted by the expression, 'Supreme *Brahman*'. He is free of the slightest trace of all defects. He has innumerable hosts of auspicious qualities, such as knowledge, strength and others, the excellence of which is limitless and which arise from His own nature. He is that which is to be known from the entire *Vedas* and the *Vedānta*. He alone is the only cause of the universe. He constitutes the support to the entire universe. He alone causes the activity of all things. And all the works enjoined in the *Vedas* constitute His worship. When worshipped through different works (that are appropriate and suitable) He bestows the results known as righteousness, wealth, fulfilment of desires and final release.

This has been, indeed, declared in the following passages. "I alone am to be known from all the *Vedas*" (XV 15), "I am the source of everything, everything proceeds from Me" (X 8), "Knowing Me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, he attains peace" (V 29), "(Thus) other than Myself, there is nothing else whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (Dhananjaya)" (VII 7), "Man attains perfection by worshiping by his own duty Him from whom is the activity of all beings and by whom all things are pervaded" (XVIII 46), and "He who knows Me to be birthless, without beginning and the great lord of the world" (X 3).

All this is the duty of the Brahman arising from his innate disposition<sup>901</sup>

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दास्य युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।

दानमोक्षरभावश्च क्षात्र कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४३ ॥

<sup>901</sup> There appears to be a reading, '*brahma-karma*', but it is adopted neither by Śrī Śaṅkara nor by Śrī Rāmānuja both of whom read '*brāhmaṇi karma*'



43. *Heroism, invincibility, resoluteness, skill as also dauntlessness even in battle, generosity, and masterfulness—this is the duty of the Kṣatriya arising from his innate disposition,*

Heroism (*śauryam*) is the capacity to get into a battle without feeling any fear. Invincibility (*tejas*) is the ability to remain undefeated by enemies. Resoluteness (*dhr̥ti*) is the ability, in respect of a work that has been started, to complete it, in spite of obstacles coming up. Skill (*dākṣyam*) is the ability to carry out all works. Dauntlessness even in battle is not retiring (from battle) even when one's death is felt to be inevitable. Generosity is the giving away of one's own wealth till it becomes wholly the property of others. Masterfulness is the ability to rule all men other than oneself.

This is the duty of the Kṣatriya arising from his own innate disposition.

कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्य वैश्य कर्म स्वभावजम् ।

44 *Farming, cattle-breeding, and trade comprise the duty of the Vaiśya arising from his innate disposition.*

Farming is ploughing (the land) with a view to produce crops. The meaning of cattle-breeding<sup>902</sup> is looking after kine. Trade is the activity which leads to the amassing of wealth and which consists of buying and selling.

This is the duty of the Vaiśya arising from his innate disposition.

परिचर्यात्मक कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥ ४४ ॥

44 *But the duty of the Śūdra arising from his innate disposition is essentially of the nature of service.*

The duty of the Śūdra, arising from his innate disposition, consists of service to the three previous castes<sup>903</sup>.

<sup>902</sup> Śrī Rāmānuja reads 'go-rakṣya', while Śrī Śaṅkara has 'gaurakṣya'. They both mean much the same.

<sup>903</sup> This refers to caste duty only. *Bhakti* and *propaṭh* are open to him as to men of other castes, as taught in IX 32 and elsewhere. But *T. C.* considers caste duty as primary—anything else should be done without hindering it.

All this has been said as illustrative of sacrifices and such other works which are enjoined in the *śāstras* and which ought to be done, along with the avocations of the four castes. Sacrifices and such other works are, indeed, common to the (first) three castes. Control of the senses and such other duties are common to those who, among the (first) three castes, seek for final release.

Considering that control of the senses, control of the mind and such other duties can be easily carried out by the Brahmin, as the dominance of the *sattva* (in him) is derived from his innate disposition, control of the senses and such other duties have been stated to be his duty arising from his innate disposition. Having regard, however, to the fact that control of the senses, control of the mind and such other duties can be carried out only with difficulty by the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas, because of the *rajas* and the *tamas* being respectively dominant naturally (in them), these have not been described as their duty.

But the vocation of a Brahmin is officiating in sacrifices, teaching the *Vedas* and receiving gifts; that of the Kṣatriya is the protection and administration of the state; and that of the Vaiśya is farming and other things as mentioned earlier. But the duty, as well as the profession of the Śūdra, is service to the three previous castes.

स्वेस्वे कर्मण्यभिरतस्सिद्धिं लभते नरः ।

स्वकर्मनिरतस्सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥ ४५ ॥

45 Man gains supreme beatitude when each person is devoted to his duty. Hear (now) how one who is devoted to his own duty attains beatitude.

When each person is devoted to his duty in the manner set out earlier, man gains supreme beatitude, that is, the attainment of the supreme state of final release<sup>904</sup>. How he who is devoted to his duty attains beatitude, that is, reaches the supreme state of final release, hear about it.

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥ ४६ ॥

904 Śrī Śaṅkara takes *sarvavidhā* to mean fitness for the discipline of *jñāna*.

46 *Man attains perfection by worshipping by his own duty Him from whom is the activity of all things (inanimate and animate) and by whom all this is pervaded*

By worshipping Him from whom is all such activity as birth of all things (animate and inanimate) and by whom all this is pervaded, that is, (by worshipping) Myself who remain in Indra and other gods as the Internal Ruler, man attains perfection which consists in the attainment of Myself through My grace

It has been stated earlier that everything springs from Me and that all this is pervaded by Me, in passages<sup>905</sup> like the following "I am the (place of) origin as well as the (place of) dissolution of the whole universe" (VII 6), "(Thus) other than Myself, there is nothing whatever which is higher, O Arjuna (Dhanarajaya)" (VII 7), "The whole of this universe is pervaded by Me whose nature (lit form) is not manifest" (IX 4), "With Me as the witnessing overlord, the *prakṛti* gives birth to the universe with (all its) movable and immovable beings" (IX 10), and "I am the source of everything everything proceeds from Me" (X 8)

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

47. *The discipline (namely, karma-yoga) which is proper to one (in the embodied state), (even) when defective (in performance), is better (for one) than the discipline (namely, jñāna-yoga) which belongs to another, (even) performed well (occasionally)*

The discipline which is proper to one,<sup>906</sup> that is, the discipline which is suitable for adoption by oneself with one's own effort only, consists in worshipping Myself, having given up agency and such other things as taught For the discipline known as *karma-yoga*,

905 These passages teach such truths about the Lord as that He is the cause of all things, is superior to them, pervades them and controls them (T C)

906 'Svadharma' here cannot refer to the duties of castes and stages of life, praise of these is redundant Nor is it relevant to take it to mean the duties prescribed in the Vedas, as contrasted with those of other religions Nor can it refer to Arjuna's duty of war, as contrasted with his desire to adopt the life of a mendicant ascetic This has been dealt with already Thus it can refer only to *karma-yoga* as contrasted with *jñāna yoga* (T C)

which consists in the activities of the sense-organs, is easy to carry out by a person who is in association with the *prakṛti*. Therefore the discipline known as *karma-yoga*, though defective in performance, is better (for one) than the discipline which is suitable to another, that is, than the *jñāna-yoga* which is the discipline proper for a person who is adept in conquering the sense-organs, which is liable to mischance because of its consisting of control over all the sense-organs and which is well performed (only) occasionally

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains the same

स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन् नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ ४७ ॥

47 One who carries out the discipline which is determined by his own nature does not incur evil

Because (the discipline of) *karma*, on account of its consisting of the activities of the sense-organs is for one who is associated with the *prakṛti*, determined by his nature, he carrying it out does not incur evil, that is, (does not get involved in) *saṃsāra*. This is because (the discipline of) *karma* is not liable to mischance. But, because *jñāna-yoga* is liable to mischance on account of its requiring the control of all sense-organs for being carried out, one devoted to it may certainly incur evil from a mishap. Therefore He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) brings back to mind what has been taught in the third chapter - that *karma-yoga* is superior (to *jñāna-yoga*)

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।

सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृता ॥ ४८ ॥

48 O Arjuna (Kauṇṭeya), (the discipline of) works, being in consonance with nature, should not be given up, even if attended with imperfections (in the form of requiring great efforts). For all undertakings (whether they relate to *karma-yoga* or *jñāna-yoga*) are enveloped by imperfections (in the form of requiring painful effort) as fire by smoke.

Therefore, one should not give up works, which, because of their being in consonance with nature are easy to perform and not liable to mischance, even though they may be attended with imperfections,

that is, with painful effort <sup>907</sup> The meaning is that even one who is fit for *jñāna-yoga* should perform only *karma-yoga*. All undertakings that is, the undertakings of works and the undertakings of (the discipline of) *jñāna*, are indeed enveloped by imperfections, by painful effort, as fire by smoke. But there is this difference that while *karma-yoga* is easy to do and free from the liability to mischance, *jñāna-yoga* is the opposite of this.

असक्तबुद्धिस्सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमा सन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥ ४९ ॥

49 One whose mind is without attachment everywhere, who has conquered his mind and who is free from longing (after a sense of agency and such other things), attains through (the threefold) renunciation, success in (realising) the state of being free from all activity (of the sense-organs) (during meditation on the self)

One whose mind is without attachment everywhere, that is, in regard to fruits and such other things, who is self-controlled, that is, has conquered his mind—who, by thinking over the agency of the Supreme Person, is free from longing in regard to the sense of agency of the self, and who is thus associated with the *sannyāsa* which has been conclusively shown to be identical with *tyāga*—such a person, performing works, attains success in (realising) the state of being free from all activity <sup>908</sup> The meaning is that he attains supreme steadfastness in meditation which is the fruit of even *jñāna-yoga*; he gains the attainment of the *yoga* of meditation (*dhyāna-yoga*) which consists of the cessation of the activity of the sense-organs and which is to be described hereafter.

907 Śrī Śaṅkara, while reaffirming the monist position that works are impossible to renounce only by the person who lacks right knowledge, also points out that the followers of Kapāḍa cannot find support in this verse. Śrī Madhva, according to N. Subba Rao, takes the view that another's duty, though it may seem to lead more certainly to the highest good, should not be preferred, and one's own duty given up because it cannot be performed well. T. C. refers to an attempt to regard this verse as supporting the Śāṅkhya view about works.

908 This is success in *yoga*, according to Śrī Madhva. Śrī Śaṅkara explains it as a state resulting from the knowledge of the Self as actionless and it immediately precedes emancipation.

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।

समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥ ५० ॥

50 How one who has attained success (in meditation) attains the *brahman* (or the self), who is the supreme goal of knowledge (realised in meditation)—listen to that in brief from Me, O Arjuna (Kaunteya)

One who has attained success is one who has attained success in meditation brought about by the *karma-yoga* practised day after day till death. How, that is, living in what manner, he attains the *brahman*,<sup>909</sup> listen to that in brief from Me. It is that same *brahman* who is described as one who is the supreme goal of knowledge. The meaning is that he (the self) is the supreme culmination of knowledge which consists of meditation, (its) supreme goal.

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्याऽऽत्मानं नियम्य च ।

शब्दादीन्विषयास्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥ ५१ ॥

विबित्तसेवी लब्धाशी यतवाक्कायमानस ।

ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रित ॥ ५२ ॥

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।

विमुच्य निर्ममश्शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ ५३ ॥

51 He who is endowed with a pure mind, who controls the mind by the will, renouncing sound and other objects of sense, casting aside desire and aversion,

52 Who resorts to solitude, who eats lightly, who has his speech, body and mind well under control, who is ever engaged in the yoga of meditation, who holds fast to detachment

53 Giving up egotism, violence, pride, desire, anger and property, who is free from the sense of possessiveness and tranquil—he is fit for the state of the *brahman*

909 The meaning of 'brahman' here is made clear in the commentary under verses 53 and 54. It is taken to stand for the self as it is in its essential nature. Śrī Śaṅkara understands it to refer to the Supreme Brahman. He enters into some discussion to show how the Brahman is the culmination of knowledge. Śrī Madhva's view, as given by N. Subba Rao, is that the *brahman* here is Śrī, who presides over the *pradhān*.

He who is endowed with a pure mind, that is, with a mind concerned with the principle of the self as it is in reality, who controls the mind by the will,<sup>910</sup> that is, who makes the mind fit for meditation by making it turn away from the objects of the senses, renouncing sound and other objects of sense, that is, keeping (them) away, and casting aside desire and aversion caused by them, who resorts to solitude, that is, who remains in a lonely place free from all obstacles to meditation, who eats lightly, that is, who is free from eating too much and fasting, who has his speech, body and mind well under restraint, that is, who has the activities of the body, speech and mind turned towards meditation,<sup>911</sup> who is ever engaged in the *yoga* of meditation, that is, who, having become like this, is engaged in the *yoga* of meditation,<sup>912</sup> day after day till death, who holds fast to detachment that is, who is fostering the feeling of lack of attachment to everything by thinking upon the imperfections of all things other than the entity which is being meditated upon, giving up egotism or esteeming what is other than the self as the self strength or the strength of impressed tendencies which cause the increase of such (egotism) and the pride, passion, anger and possession of property based on such (strength of impressed tendencies), who is free from the sense of possessiveness, that is, who, in regard to things that do not belong to oneself, is free of the notion that they belong to oneself, who is tranquil, that is, has for his sole delight the experience of the self- he who has become thus and carries on the *yoga* of meditation becomes fit for *brahma-bhūya*, that is, for the state of the *brahman*.<sup>913</sup> The meaning is that, released from all bonds, he experiences the self as it is in reality

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

समस्तबन्धेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ ५४ ॥

910 Śrī Śaṅkara renders "restraining the aggregate of the body and the senses"

911 This is done by practising steady postures, uttering nothing other than the *prapara* and thinking only of the Lord with auspicious qualities (T C)

912 Śrī Śaṅkara explains *dhyāna-yoga* as meditation on the self (*dhyāna*) and one-pointed concentration (*yoga*) thereon

913 Cf. Śrī Śaṅkara 'becomes fit for becoming the *Brahman*' Śrī Mādhva explains "becomes fit for resting his mind always in the *Brahman*"

54 *He who has realised the state of the brahman and who is tranquil in spirit, neither grieves nor desires. The same to all beings, he attains eminent devotion for Me.*

He who has realised the state of the *brahman*, that is, he to whom the essential nature of the self has become manifest as consisting of infinite-knowledge and as having the sole character of being absolutely dependant on and subservient to Me—for has not absolute dependence on and subservience to Myself been declared in “But know that which is other than this (lower *prakṛti*) to be the higher *prakṛti* belonging to Me,” (VII 5)—who is tranquil in spirit, that is, whose essential nature is not soiled by various sufferings, the effect of *larina* and such other things,<sup>914</sup> (such a person) does not grieve about any particular beings other than Myself, nor desires<sup>915</sup> anything whatever. On the contrary, however, in indifference he is the same to all beings other than Myself,<sup>916</sup> and looking upon all the multitudes of things (in the universe) as (worthless) like straw, he attains eminent devotion for Me. That is, he attains eminent devotion<sup>917</sup> which is of the form of an experience dear beyond description, towards Myself who am the Lord of all, to whom the creation, protection and dissolution of the entire universe is sport, who am free of the slightest trace of all that is evil, who am the sole ground of innumerable hosts of auspicious qualities the excellence of which is unbounded, who am the sea of nectar of beauty, who am always in association with Lakṣmi, whose eyes are lotus-like and who am his (i.e., the aspirant’s) own Lord,

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) states the results of this (devotion)

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यद्वास्मि तत्स्वत ।

यतो मा तत्स्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥ ५५ ॥

914 Śrī Rāmānuja appears to have here in mind *yogasūtras* (124), where *kleśas*, *karma*, *vipākas* and *āyus* are mentioned. These denote respectively the five causes of misery (i.e., ignorance, egotism, desire, aversion and strong passion), the effects of previous deeds in the form of spiritual merit and sin, the ripened results of previous actions like longevity and enjoyments, and impressions carried down from previous births.

915 Śrī Śaṅkara notices a reading, ‘*arhṣati*’, for ‘*kṛṣṇati*’.

916 He will look upon their joys and sufferings as his own, according to Śrī Śaṅkara.

917 Śrī Śaṅkara explains *puruṣa bhakti* as devotion having the characteristic of knowledge. To Śrī Rāmānuja, it is the first rung of a ladder, as shown under the next verse.



55 By (this) devotion he understands Me, who I am and how great Knowing Me truly, he through it (i.e. devotion) enters into Me thereafter

Through devotion of the kind described, he perceives well and truly Myself who have been already described—who I am in essential nature and having regard to My attributes,<sup>918</sup> and how great I am in My qualities and sovereign glory. Knowing Me truly thereafter, that is, after getting knowledge of the truth, through it, that is, through devotion,<sup>919</sup> he enters into Me that is, completely enters into Me (so as to redound to My glory)<sup>920</sup>. The meaning is that he attains Me through the devotion the excellence of which is without limits and which arises in time subsequent to the direct vision of the essential nature, attributes, auspicious qualities and sovereign glory (of Myself), as they are in reality.

Only that devotion which has been pointed out as the cause of attainment is here denoted by 'through it'<sup>921</sup> for it alone has been stated to be the actual cause of entrance in the passage, "But through exclusive devotion, it is possible (really to know, to see and to enter into Me)" (XI 54).

In this manner, the culminating stage has been described in the development of the performance of obligatory and occasional works<sup>922</sup> which are suitable to one's caste and stage of life, the results

918 'Svarupa' denotes the *dharma* and *avabhāva* 'the distinctive attributes. Another view is that the former stands for the distinctive attributes, while the latter refers to the quality of easy accessibility (T. C.)

919 The devotion which leads to the knowledge mentioned and that which is responsible for 'entrance' into the Lord represent earlier and later stages in the development of *bhakti* (T. C.)

920 'Vishat' is glossed as *praviśati*. This, as T. C. points out, hints that the regular form of the verb is *parama-pada* and at the same time reminds us of XI 54. According to Śrī Śāṅkara there is no essential difference between knowing the *Brahman* and entering into Him. He argues that the performance of works can never lead to this consummation.

921 In other works, Śrī Rāmānuja speaks of *para-bhakti* (eminent devotion), *para-jñāna* (eminent knowledge) and *parama-bhakti* (supreme devotion) as three successive stages in the development of devotion to God. The first stage leads to knowledge of the Lord by way of direct vision, which in turn makes it impossible for the devotee to endure further separation from the Lord. This is the highest stage of devotion, after reaching which salvation is imminent.

922 The development extends up to the *para-bhakti*, *para-jñāna* and *parama-bhakti* mentioned in verses 54-55 (T. C.)

of which have been given up and which are of the form of worship of the Supreme Person. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now says that the culminating stage is the same even for works enjoined for the satisfaction of desires, provided they are carried out in the very same manner as already taught.

सर्वकर्मण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।

मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वत पदमव्ययम् ॥ ५६ ॥

56 One to whom I am the refuge and who performs at all times works even of all kinds, attains through My grace the eternal immutable goal.

One to whom I am the refuge, that is one who has made over to Me agency and such other things, and who performs not merely obligatory and occasional works but all works,<sup>923</sup> even those enjoined for the satisfaction of desires, (he) attains through My grace the eternal goal which is immutable, that is, which is perfect. 'Pada' means that which is attained; the meaning is that he attains Me (as taught in the previous verse).

Because this is so (i.e., the means for the attainment of the highest end of man), therefore (it is now enjoined)

चेतसा सर्वकर्मणि मयि सन्यस्य मत्पर ।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तस्ततत भव ॥ ५७ ॥

57 Making over all works to Me with your mind (absorbed in the self regarded as subservient to Me), holding Me to be the Supreme Being (and the supreme goal), and seeking a state of mind conducive to union (with Me), concentrate your mind on Me always.

'With your mind' means 'with a mind which regards the self as belonging to Me and as ruled by Me'. For it has been stated: "Making over all actions to Me, with a mind devoted to the self." (III 30) Making over (thus) to Me all works along with the agent

<sup>923</sup> Even prohibited actions, according to Śrī Saṅkara. He explains that, in order to extol bhakti yoga, it is, stated here that the performance of even prohibited actions is no bar to its bringing about fitness for the discipline of knowledge.

(thereof) and the objects of worship (therein), holding Me to be the Supreme Being, that is, constantly thinking that I alone am to be attained as the goal, doing works and seeking<sup>924</sup> only this state of mind which is conducive to union (with Me)<sup>925</sup> — concentrate your mind on Me always

मच्चित्तस्सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।

अथ चेत्त्वमहकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनश्यसि ॥ ५८ ॥

58 With your mind concentrated on Me, you will overcome all difficulties through My grace. If, however, out of egotism, you will not listen (to My words), you will be destroyed.

With your mind concentrated on Me in this manner, performing all works, you will overcome all difficulties in *samādhi* only through My grace. If, however, out of egoism, that is, out of the feeling, "Only I know everything concerning what ought to be done and what ought not to be done", you will not listen to (i.e., follow) what has been stated by Me, you will be destroyed, that is, you will get lost<sup>926</sup>. Indeed, other than Myself, there is none who knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done by all kinds of creatures and who is the ruler (giving them laws to obey).

यद्यहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।

मिथ्यैव व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वा नियोष्यति ॥ ५९ ॥

59 If, swayed by egotism, you think, "I will not fight", that determination of yours is futile. Nature will incite you (to fight).

If, swayed by egotism, that is, by a false sense of independence in claiming to know what is beneficial and what is not beneficial to oneself, and disregarding My commandments, you think, "I will not fight", then this determination of yours based on your sense

924 Śrī Śaṅkara reads 'apāśritya' in the place of Śrī Rāmānuja's 'upāśritya'.

925 The expression, 'buddhi-yoga', here recalls the attitudes peculiar to the seeker of salvation, in regard to agency of works, their fruits, etc. (T. C.)

926. See Note 88. As this is not meant to be a curse, it is pointed out that the stress is on the value of the Lord's teaching (T. C.).

of independence will prove futile. For Nature<sup>927</sup> will incite you to war. That is, Nature (i.e., your innate disposition) will incite you who are ignorant and who are uneasy about My independence.

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) explains this further

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धस्त्वेन कर्मणा ।

कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥ ६० ॥

(6) Bound by the duty arising from your innate disposition and having indeed no self-control, you will, O Arjuna (Kauṁṭeya), do that which, out of ignorance, you desire not to do.

The duty, indeed, of the Kṣatriya, arising from his innate disposition, is heroism. Bound by your own duty namely, heroism, arising from your innate disposition and on account of it alone losing self-control, you yourself, stung by the taunts of enemies, will carry on the fight—which (fighting), now, out of *moha* that is, ignorance,<sup>928</sup> you do not desire (to carry on).

All the hosts of embodied beings have indeed been ordained by Me to follow (the promptings of) the *prakṛti*s in accordance with their previous *karma*s. Hear about it.

ईश्वरस्सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

भ्रमयन्त्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥ ६१ ॥

61 The Lord dwells, O Arjuna, in the region of heart of all embodied creatures, revolving all embodied creatures, mounted on the machine (of the body) by means of the *prakṛti*s.

The Lord, Vāsudeva, who is engaged in ruling over all, dwells in the region of the heart, in the region where arises knowledge on which depend all action and cessation from action. Doing what

<sup>927</sup> *Āpatiya svabhāva*, according to Śrī Śaṅkara. T. C. points out that though '*prakṛti*' in this stanza strictly means 'matter that has evolved into the form of the body' (of Arjuna), it is referred to as '*svabhāva*' in the next, and '*svabhāva*' has been explained under verse 41.

<sup>928</sup> Śrī Śaṅkara would supply '*ira*' ('as it were') after '*yendrāvḍhāna*' ('mounted on a machine'). He explains that the illusive power of *māyā* prompts all creatures to act as if they were wooden dolls placed on mechanical contrivances. Probably he is thinking of puppets.

by what means, does He stand ? He is revolving all embodied creatures mounted on the machine, by means of the *māyā* <sup>928</sup> The meaning is that He dwells, causing all embodied creatures, mounted on the machine—which has been made by Himself and none other, which is in the (evolved) condition of the body and the senses, and which is called the *prakṛti*—to act according to the *guṇas* by means of the *māyā* which is made up of the *satva* and the other *guṇas* and which is His own <sup>929</sup>

Previously, indeed, this has been taught in “And I am well established in the hearts of all From Me (come) memory, knowledge and their loss also” (XV 15), and also in “Everything proceeds from Me” (X 8) And there are also passages of the scriptures such as “He who dwelling in the self” (*Mādh-Bṛh Up* III 7 22)

He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) speaks about the means of escape from this *māyā*

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।

तत्प्रसादात्परा शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥ ६२ ॥

62 See refuge with Him alone, O Arjuna (*Bhārata*), with all your heart Through His grace, you will obtain supreme peace and the eternal abode

From whom it is such (that this *māyā* cannot be conquered by one's own unaided efforts, therefore with Him alone who rules over all, who through parental solicitude for one depending on Him has become your charioteer, and who commands you, “Act in this manner”—seek refuge with all your heart, that is, with all your thought and feeling That is, follow Him <sup>930</sup> with all your heart and soul

929 Vide commentary under VII 14 for the meaning of ‘*māyā*’ The point that is made here is that the actions of embodied souls, associated with bodies made of the *prakṛti* are in the first instance determined by the *guṇa* of *prakṛti* dominant for the time being in accordance with the *vīśvānā* and rules accruing from past *karma* The law of *karma* is regulated by God, and our power to act also comes ultimately from Him For the comparison of the body-soul relationship to that between a machine and its motive force, see *Kath 1 p* (III 3) and *Śrī Up* (I 6)

930 Though men are prompted to act by the *māyā* they are free agents still, as they can overcome the *māyā* by seeking the Lord as *ārāṇa*, the protector or the means (for overcoming the *māyā*) through His protection So ‘*sarāṇagatā*’ here means ‘following what has been taught’

Even otherwise, carrying on fighting in war and such other things cannot be avoided by you who are ignorant and moved to act by His *adṛṣṭ*. If that happens, you will get lost. Therefore, carry on fighting and do such other things in the way which has been taught by Him. Such is the meaning.

Acting thus, you will obtain supreme peace, that is, the destruction of all bonds, and the eternal abode which (abode) has been described by the following and hundreds of other scriptural texts. "That highest seat of Viṣṇu which the eternally free souls always see" (*R V I 22. 20 & Taṭt Sam I 3 6*), "They, full of devotion, reach this Heaven where remain the shining eternally free souls from the immemorial past" (*Taṭt Ar III 12*) "Where remain the ancient sages, the first-born" (*Taṭt Sam IV 7 13 1*) "The supreme seat (of the Lord) is placed above Paradise in the heart of the Highest Heaven" (*M Nār X 21*) "He who is in the Highest Heaven and presides over this" (*R V X 129 7 & Taṭt Br II 7*), "Now that Light which shines beyond this Highest Heaven" (*Ch Up III 13 7*), and "He reaches the end of the road, the highest seat of Viṣṇu" (*Kaṭh Up III 7*)

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यात गुह्याद्गुह्यतर मया ।

विमृश्यैतदक्षेपेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ ६३ ॥

63 Thus have you been taught by Me the knowledge more mysterious than any mystery. After considering this fully, do that which you wish to do.

Thus, in this way, have you been taught everything to be learnt by those aspiring for salvation and more mysterious than all mysteries—that which related to *karma-yoga*, that which relates to *jñāna-yoga* and that which relates to *bhakti-yoga*. After considering this fully, in whatever manner you wish (to act) according to your qualification, act accordingly. The meaning is "Practice according to your wish *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga*"<sup>931</sup>

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयश्शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

इष्टोऽसि मे दुर्धमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥ ६४ ॥

931 'Do as you wish' does not mean 'Fight or not, as you please'. For Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taught that duties cannot be given up and that Arjuna, even if he tries, cannot stay away from fighting.

64 Listen again to My supreme words, the most secret of all. As you are very dear to Me, I am speaking for your good

It has indeed been stated earlier that because of the superiority of *bhakti-yoga* it is the most secret<sup>932</sup> among all mysteries, in such passages as "I shall teach you who are without envy this most secret knowledge" (IX 1) Listen again to My supreme words relating to it (i.e., *bhakti-yoga*) Because you are very dear, therefore I shall speak for your good<sup>933</sup>

मन्मना भव मद्रक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्य ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥ ६५ ॥

65 Be one whose mind is placed on Me Be My devotee Be My worshipper Prostrate before Me You will straightaway attain Me I solemnly assure you that this is true, (as) you are dear to Me

What is enjoined in *Vedānta* texts such as, "I know this great Person of sunlike lustre who is beyond the *prakṛti* He who thus knows Him becomes here like unto a released self there is no other path for the attainment of final release" (*Taitt. Ar.* III. 12 7), is knowledge (*vedana*) (of the Lord) it can be expressed (more specifically) by the words, 'meditation' (*dhyāna*) and 'worship' (*upāsana*)<sup>934</sup> it is of the form of direct vision in it is continued remembrance and it is inexpressibly dear This (knowledge)<sup>935</sup> is enjoined here (when the direct means to final release has to be taught) in "Be one whose mind is placed on Me"

932 Secular sciences are not mysteries the *karma-bhāṣa* is a mystery of the first order, more mysterious than this are the disciplines suitable to a seeker of salvation Even among, these, as the next stanza shows, *bhakti-yoga* is the greatest mystery (*T. C.*)

933 '*Hitaṁ*' is taken by Śrī Śaṅkara to mean the supreme means for the attainment of (monastic) knowledge

934 Another reading of the *bhāṣya* text is '*vedanādhyānopāsanaḥ śabdavācyaḥ*' If '*vedana*' becomes part of the compound word, the substantive which the latter qualifies has to be understood, as '*smṛti-saṁtānaḥ*', being in neuter gender, has to be a *bahuvrīhī* compound *T. C.* suggests that the word to be understood should mean something like '*cutāgrya*'

935. For a detailed discussion of the nature of *vedana*, see the *Leṭhasūddhānta* section under S. B. (I 1 1)

**Be My devotee** The meaning is as one to whom I am inexpressibly dear, hold Me in continuous remembrance which is surpassingly dear, on account of My being inexpressibly dear (to you) **Be My worshipper** Here too, "Be My devotee", continues to have application 'Yajana' is worship (and not the performance of particular sacrifices) Be absorbed in worshipping Me who am inexpressibly dear to you Worship is the behaviour proper to complete subservience to and absolute dependence (on the Lord)

**Prostrate before Me** Prostration is bowing down in submission (with the mind as well as with the body) The meaning is "Be very humble and submissive before Me with inexpressible love "

Being thus, you will straightaway attain Me I solemnly assure you that this is true That is, I give you the solemn assurance It is not intended merely to rouse your interest For you are dear to Me It has already been declared, "For I am inexpressibly dear to the man of wisdom and he too is dear to Me" (VII 17) In regard to him whose love for Me is very great, My love for him also becomes very great Therefore, unable to bear separation from him, I cause him to attain Me Hence what has been solemnly assured to the effect, "You will straightaway attain Me", is true indeed <sup>936</sup>

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेक शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ ६६ ॥

66 Completely renouncing all dharmas, seek Me alone as refuge  
I will release you from all sins Do not grieve

Renouncing all dharmas which consist of *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*, which constitute the means for the highest good (of salvation), and which are being performed with great love as My worship according to qualification—(renouncing them all) with the complete renunciation of the sense of agency, possessiveness in works, fruits and such other things, in the manner taught (having done so), continuously think of Me as the agent, the object of worship, the goal

<sup>936</sup> This verse differs from IX. 34 in the second line only As Prof M Rangacharya has put it, the stanza "differs from that of the ninth chapter in shifting the emphasis from the love of devotee to God to the love of God for the devotee" (L G III, p 352)



of attainment and the means<sup>927</sup> It is this that has been firmly established as the renunciation, in accordance with the *śāstras*, of all *dharma*s, in the passage at the beginning of this chapter which commences from "In regard to that (much-debated) *tyāga*, hear from Me the established conclusion, O Arjuna (Bharatarasabha)! *Tyāga*, indeed, O Arjuna (Puruṣa-vyāghra), has been described to be of three kinds" (XVIII 4), and ends with "(When works are performed ) giving up attachment and the fruits also, that renunciation is deemed to be characterised by the quality of *sattva* For it is not possible for one who is embodied to give up works altogether But he who has renounced the fruits of works, is said to have renounced" (XVIII 9, 11)<sup>928</sup>

I will release you from all sins That is, I will release you from all sins which stand in the way of the attainment of Myself, and which consist of countless acts of doing what ought not to be done and omissions to do what ought to be done, piled up from time without beginning Do not grieve That is, indulge not in grief

An alternative explanation is also possible The Lord spoke (this), driving away the grief<sup>929</sup> of Arjuna who felt dejected, thinking that *bhakti-yoga* can be practised successfully only by a person to whom the Lord is inexpressibly dear and who is free from all sins, that the

927 When carrying out a religious act, the ignorant person looks upon himself as the agent, a divine entity as the object of worship, *Śaṛpa* or some other thing as the fruits and the ritual as the means But Arjuna is called upon to look upon God the Internal Ruler of the self as the agent, God the Internal Ruler of the gods as the object of worship, God as the immediate and ultimate object of attainment and God as the means, the giver of fruits (T C)

928. 'Dharma' here is taken to stand for the three disciplines of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*, as it can denote the means for steady adherence or *dharma-sādhanā*. Cf Note 889 Śrī Śaṅkara regards this stanza as teaching the right vision which is the culmination of the discipline of *karma* and which involves the giving up of all works Giving up *dharma*s includes the giving up of *adharma*s also The refuge-seeking that is taught should rest on the realisation that the self is the *Brahman* Śrī Madhva says that the renunciation of *dharma*s is the renunciation of fruits Otherwise, he asks, how can there be any commandment to fight? He also quotes XVIII 11

929. T C explains that Arjuna's grief now cannot be that of the first chapter or of the sixteenth Nor can it arise out of ignorance or lack of clear knowledge of the Lord's teachings or doubts about the fruits or a feeling of unfitness to practise *bhakti-yoga* It may, however, arise out of contemplation of the prospect of expiating the sins opposed to the starting of *bhakti-yoga* or of the delay involved therein. In this view, it is possible to understand the stanza, giving its primary meaning to renunciation

sins standing in its way were countless, that the works for expiating them, when carried out in limited time, could not help in crossing over them : and that hence he (Arjuna) was unfit for starting *bhakti-yoga* (So the Lord said) . " Completely renouncing all *dharmas*, seek Me alone as refuge. "

Completely renouncing all religious works (*dharmas*), which are correlated to the innumerable sins of varied kinds, gathered from time immemorial and opposed to the starting of *bhakti-yoga*, which are expiations for every one of them, which consist of the *kṛcchra*, *cāṇ-drāyana*, *kūlmāṇḍa*, *vaivānara*, *vṛṇāpati*, *pavitresṭi*, *irvṛi*, *agnis-ṭoma* and others, which are of varied kinds, and which are difficult to be carried out by you living in limited time in order to succeed in starting *bhakti-yoga*, surrender, finding refuge with Me alone, who am supremely merciful, who am the refuge of all persons without taking into consideration the differences among them (relating to such things as birth, education and so on), and who am the sea of parental solicitude for those dependant on Me

I shall release you from all sins the nature of which has been described and which are opposed to the commencement of (the discipline of) devotion Do not grieve <sup>840</sup>

इद ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।

न चाशुभ्रूषवे वाच्य न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥ ६७ ॥

67 *Never should this be told by you to one who has not practised austerities, nor to one who is not a devotee, nor to one who has no desire to listen and learn, and nor certainly to him who shows envy and malice towards Me*

This most secret *sāstra* has been taught to you by Me It should not be taught by you to one without penances, that is, to one who has not practised austerities Never should this be told to one who is not a devotee of yourself the teacher and Myself The meaning is that it should not be taught by you to one who, though a performer of penances, is not a devotee Nor to one who has no desire to listen and learn that is, it should not be taught to one who, though a devotee

840. Both the interpretations explain this famous stanza as concerned with *bhakti-yoga*. For the view regarding it as teaching *prapatti*, see Introduction.

has no desire to listen and learn Nor to one who shows envy and malice towards Me it should not be taught to him who, when My essential nature, My sovereign glories and My qualities are described, imputes evil The mention (of the envious person) in a different grammatical case (namely, the nominative, while the rest have been referred to in the dative) is in order to teach that he deserves most of all to be avoided

य इदं परमं गुह्यं मद्भुक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।

भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥ ६८ ॥

68 *He who expounds this highest mystery to My devotees, will acquire great devotion towards Me and attain Me only. No doubt (about this)*

Whoever expounds, that is, teaches, explains and comments on, this highest mystery to My devotees<sup>941</sup>—he, acquiring supreme devotion towards Me, will attain Me only. No doubt about this

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृतम् ।

भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥ ६९ ॥

69 *Nor is there anyone among men who excels him in doing what is pleasing to Me Nor will there be another on earth dearer to Me than he*

Among men, before this (time), there was no other man excelling him in doing what was pleasing to Me Hereafter, too there will not be (another such) The reference at first to those who are unfit (to hear the teachings of the *Gītā*) is intended to teach that expounding to them is even more displeasing (to the Lord) than not expounding to those who are fit

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं सवादमावयोः ।

ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टस्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ ७० ॥

70 *It is My conviction that I shall have been worshipped through the sacrifice of knowledge by him who will study this dialogue between us which is in harmony with righteousness*

<sup>941</sup> Devotion is the only qualification for listening to the exposition of the *Gītā* (T. C.).

He who will study this dialogue between us which is in harmony with righteousness, by him I shall have been worshipped through the sacrifice of knowledge. Such is My conviction. The meaning is that sacrifice of knowledge which is mentioned in this (work).<sup>942</sup> I shall have been worshipped through it.

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।

सोऽपि मुक्तश्शुभांल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥ ७१ ॥

71 And the man who listens to it with faith and without envy, even he, released (from sins opposed to devotion), will reach the auspicious hosts of those who have performed virtuous deeds.

The man who, with faith and without envy, merely listens (to the teaching of the *Gītā* by a qualified preceptor), even he, merely through such listening, gets released from all sins opposed to devotion (to the Lord) he will reach the *lokas*, that is, the hosts of My devotees who have performed virtuous deeds.<sup>943</sup>

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पाथं त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।

कच्चिदज्ञानसमोहं प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥ ७२ ॥

72 Has this been heard by you, O Arjuna (Pārtha), with a one-pointed mind? Has your delusion, born of ignorance, been destroyed?

O Arjuna (Pārtha), has this, which has been taught by Me, been heard by you with an attentive mind? Has your delusion, born of ignorance, been destroyed—that ignorance, deluded by which you said, 'I shall not fight'?

942. The reference here, says T. C., is to the sacrifice of knowledge mentioned in IX. 15, and not to that in IV. 33. This is evidently because the latter refers only to the element of knowledge in *karma-yoga*. Śrī Śaṅkara explains that *jñāna-yajña* is the best, being mental worship, among *vidhi* (ceremonial worship), *yajña*, *upāsana* (muttering prayers inaudibly) and *mānasa* (mental worship). This is also accepted by T. C.

943. Listening implies listening to a preceptor and thus precludes unsystematic study by one's own unaided efforts. The fruits of such listening are not the celestial worlds like *Svarga*, which too are almost like Hell in keeping one away from final release, but contact with a group of devotees who will inculcate devotion and lead one to salvation (T. C.). Śrī Śaṅkara thinks that '*lokas*' here refer to the worlds won by those performing *agnihotra* and such other rituals.

अर्जुन उवाच—

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽभ्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ ७३ ॥

ARJUNA SAID

73 Through Your grace, gone is my delusion and (accurate) knowledge obtained Rid of doubts— I stand (restored to my normal state) I will act according to Your word

Delusion is perverse knowledge Through Your grace that (delusion) of mine is gone *Smṛti* is the knowledge of the nature of things as it is, that has been obtained <sup>944</sup>

The delusion which consists in mistaking as the self the *prakṛti* which is other than the self, that which consists in looking on the sum of things—made up of the animate and inanimate and, on account of being the body of the Supreme Person, having Him for its Self—as not having Him for its Self, and that which consists in the view that the works obligatory and occasional, tend to bind, when, being the worship of the Supreme Person, they form the means for attaining Him—all (this delusion) is gone

The knowledge of the self as having for its sole defining attribute the character of being the knower, thus being different from the *prakṛti* and devoid of its qualities and having for its essential nature utter subservience to and complete dependence on the Supreme Person and subjection to His rule, the knowledge of the truth about the Supreme Person who is denotable by the expression, 'Supreme *Brahman*', who is the great ocean of all auspicious qualities such as knowledge, strength, sovereignty, valour, power and glory, each of limitless excellence and natural (to Him), whose essential nature consists solely of auspiciousness, who is opposed to all that is evil without exception, and to whom the rise, protection and dissolution of the entire universe are sport, and the knowledge that You are Vāsudeva, the Supreme Person, He who is to be known from the *Vedānta*, and who can be attained only by the worship of the Supreme Person which has taken the form of

944 ' *Smṛti* ' here means knowledge and not memory, because this teaching has not been heard before by Arjuna. The use of the word in this sense is not unknown See *M Nār* (X 3) (*T C*) Śrī Śaṅkara renders the word here as ' memory of the true nature of the Self '

devotion, which can be brought into being by restraint of the senses and control of the mind, the giving up of forbidden actions and the performance of occasional and obligatory rituals having the sole objective of the satisfaction of the Supreme Person, which is to be intensified day by day and which rests on the discriminatory knowledge of the higher and lower principles as being really of this kind and on its practical application—(all this) has been gained

And therefore, I stand easy in mind (restored to my normal state), with doubts dispelled and freed of all dejection having its roots in the perverse knowledge fostered by (misplaced) mercy and affection for relatives. Even now I shall carry out Your words about fighting and such other things<sup>945</sup> having to be done necessarily. The meaning is that I shall perform fighting and such other things, in the manner taught

To Dhṛtarāṣṭra who had asked (in I 1) what his sons and the Pāṇḍavas would be doing in the war

संजय उवाच—

इत्थं वासुदेवस्य पार्यस्य च महात्मनः ।

सबादमिममश्रीषमद्भुत रोमहर्षणम् ॥ ७४ ॥

SANJAYA SAID

74 Thus have I heard this wonderful and thrilling dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Vāsudeva) and the high-minded Arjuna (Pārtha)

Thus, in this way, did I hear, that is, have I been hearing, this wonderful and thrilling dialogue, even as it was spoken, between Vāsudeva, the son of Vasudeva, and His paternal aunt's son, Arjuna (Pārtha), who is a *mahātmā*, that is, high-minded, and who has sought refuge with the pair of His feet

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यतम परम् ।

योग योगेश्वरात्कुण्डात्साक्षात्कथयतस्त्वयम् ॥ ७५ ॥

75 By the favour of Vyāsa have I heard directly this supreme secret known as yoga, from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord in association (with auspicious qualities) teaching (it) in person

945. The other things include all things up to *bhakti-yoga* (T. C.)

By the favour of Vyāsa, by the grace of Vyāsa through getting supernatural eyes and ears,<sup>946</sup> have I heard this supreme secret called *yoga*,<sup>947</sup> from (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) the Lord in association (with auspicious qualities), that is, the Lord who is the treasure-house of knowledge, strength, sovereignty, valour, power and glory,<sup>948</sup> Himself teaching in person

राजन् सस्मृत्य सस्मृत्य सवादमिममद्भुतम् ।

केशवार्जुनयो पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ ७६ ॥

76 O King, remembering over and over again this wonderful and holy dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Keshava) and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again

Remembering this holy<sup>949</sup> and wonderful dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Keshava) and Arjuna which was directly heard (by me) I rejoice again and again

तच्च सस्मृत्य सस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरे ।

विस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ ७७ ॥

77 And remembering again and again that most marvellous (universal) form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hari), great is my amazement O King and I rejoice and again

Great amazement arises in me, who am in joy, remembering over and over again the most marvellous sovereign form (i.e., *utvarūpa*) of the Lord (Hari) which was shown to Arjuna and which was directly seen by me. And I rejoice again and again

Of what use is much talk about this ?

यत्र योगेश्वर. कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धर ।

तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिध्वा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ ७८ ॥

946 The reference here is to the gift of supernatural vision conferred on Sañjaya by Vyāsa in order that he might be able to describe accurately the progress of war to the blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra (*M. B. VI. 2*)

947 Because it leads to *yoga*, says Śrī Śaṅkara.

948. For 'yoga' in the sense of association with auspicious qualities, see X. 7 above.

949. As it destroys sin even when merely heard (Śrī Śaṅkara)

78. *Wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who rules over integrations (of all things with their qualities), and Arjuna, wielding his bow, there, it is my conviction, are present enduring prosperity, victory, ever-increasing wealth, and righteous statesmanship*

Wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa the son of Vasudeva, who is *yogeshvara*, that is, who rules over all those integrations which integrations with their qualities are of all things, animate and inanimate, remaining high and low (in varied conditions); and on whose will are dependant the differences in regard to the essential nature, continued existence and varied activities of all things other than Himself and wherever there is Arjuna (Pārtha)—who is His paternal aunt's son and who has found refuge at His two feet—wielding the bow, there, it is my conviction, are present prosperity, victory, ever-increasing wealth and righteous statesmanship, (all) enduring Such is the meaning <sup>950</sup>

950 (i) This stanza tells Dhṛtarāṣṭra as plainly as courtesy permits that his sons' defeat is certain. Note that Arjuna has now taken up the bow which he threw away in I. 47. (ii) 'Dhṛva' is regarded as qualifying only 'sā' by Śrī Śaṅkara.



## Appendix

श्रीमद्यामुनमुनये नम

### THE GITĀRTHASĀNGRAHA

of

Śrī Yāmunāchārīya

स्वधर्मज्ञानवैराग्यसाध्यभक्त्येकगोचर ।

नारायण पर ब्रह्म गीताशास्त्रे समीरितः ॥ १ ॥

1 In the authoritative religious treatise known as the *Gītā*, Nārāyaṇa who is the Supreme Brahman, is declared as attainable only through the help of devotion, which is to be developed by the performance of one's duties and rituals, knowledge (of the true nature of the Lord and the self) and lack of attachment (to all things other than the Lord)

Here Śrī Yāmunā sums up the teachings of the *Gītā*, Śrī Rāmānuja elaborates the implications of this stanza in the introduction to his commentary on the *Gītā*, See pages 1-4 above

ज्ञानकर्मात्मिके निष्ठे योगलक्ष्ये सुसंस्कृते ।

आत्मानुभूतिसिद्ध्यर्थे पूर्वषट्केन बोधिते ॥ २ ॥

2 In the first group of six chapters are enjoined, for the sake of success in realising the experience of the self, the disciplines of *karma* and *jñāna*, which have the vision of the self for their objective and which are well refined

The view here is set forth that the experience of the self may be gained either by *karma-yoga*, followed by *jñāna-yoga*, as taught in Chapter II, or by *karma-yoga*, containing within itself an element of *jñāna-yoga*, as taught in Chapters III to VI. The refinement refers to the feelings of dependence on God, lack of attachments to fruits other than attaining Him and such others.

मध्यमे भगवत्तत्त्वयाथात्म्यावाप्तिसिद्धये ।

ज्ञानकर्मानिनिर्बन्धो भक्तियोगः प्रकीर्तितः ॥ ३ ॥

3 In the middle group (of six chapters) is well expounded the discipline of devotion which requires (the performance of) works with (the) knowledge (of the self), for the sake of success in the perfect experience of the entity known as the Lord as He is in reality (i.e., as He is in His own distinctive form and attributes)

See the introduction to Chapter VII (p. 175)

प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तसर्वेश्वरविवेचनम् ।

कर्मधीर्मक्तिरित्यादि पूर्वशेषोऽन्तिमोदित ॥ ४ ॥

4 What is stated in the last (group of six chapters) is the distinction among matter in its primordial state, the self, matter in its evolved states and the Lord of all, as well as such things as (the discipline of) works, (the discipline of) knowledge (relating to the self) and (the discipline of) devotion, (all these being dealt with) by way of supplementing and completing that which has been taught earlier

See the introduction to Chapter XIII (p. 319)

अस्थानस्नेहकारुण्यधर्माधर्मधियाकुलम् ।

पार्थ प्रपन्नमुद्दिश्य शास्त्रावतरणं कृतम् ॥ ५ ॥

5 The introduction to the *sāstra* was made for the sake of Pārtha (Arjuna), who had sought refuge (with Śrī Kṛṣṇa for instruction), and who, out of love and pity in an inopportune situation, had become troubled with the notion that what was righteous was unrighteous

See p. 18 as also Note 25 therein

नित्यात्मासङ्गकर्महागोचरा साङ्ख्ययोगधी ।

द्वितीये स्थितधीलक्षा प्रोक्ता तन्मोहशान्तये ॥ ६ ॥

6 The dispositions of mind in regard to the self and works, which comprehend within their scope (respective) (knowledge of) the eternal self and the performance of works without attachment, and which have for their objective the state of steady understanding, are taught in the second (chapter) for the purpose of removing his (Arjuna's) delusion

See p. 64 and Note 95 therein See also p. 53

The teaching of the second chapter is understood as requiring the practice of *karma-yoga* based on some knowledge of the nature of

the self in order to achieve *jñāna-yoga*, which in turn leads to the vision of the self

असक्त्या लोकरक्षायै गुणेष्वारोप्य कर्तृताम् ।

सर्वेश्वरे वा न्यस्योक्ता तृतीये कर्मकार्यता ॥ ७ ॥

7 In the third (chapter) is taught the necessity for the performance of works, through non-attachment (to results other than the pleasure and satisfaction of the Lord, attributing the agency to the *gunas* (of the *prakṛti*) and placing (it) in the Lord of all

It is to be noted that Śrī Rāmānuja does not understand 'vā' in the stanza in the sense of a disjunctive particle. Introducing 11 30, he writes " Now is taught the necessity for the performance of work, after ascribing the agency due to the *gunas* to the Supreme Person who constitutes the Soul of all, by showing that the character of the individual selves, on account of their constituting the body of the Supreme Person, is that of subservience to Him " (p 98). He holds that the Lord, through the *gunas*, causes the activities of the self in *samsāra*

प्रसङ्गात्स्वभावोक्ति कर्मणोऽकर्मताम्य च ।

भेदा ज्ञानस्य माहात्म्य चतुर्थाध्याय उच्यते ॥ ८ ॥

8 Incidentally, there is mention of His own nature, (then) in regard to *karma* (i e , *karma-yoga*), (its) being other than *karma* (i e , as of the nature of *jñāna*), its varieties and the importance of (the element of) *jñāna* (in *karma-yoga*) are taught in the fourth chapter

See Note 164 on p 100

कर्मयोगस्य सोक्यं शैष्ठ्य काश्चन तद्विधा ।

ब्रह्मज्ञानप्रकारश्च पञ्चमाध्याय उच्यते ॥ ९ ॥

9 In the fifth chapter are taught the ease of *karma-yoga*, (its) quickness (in yielding results), some of its elements and the ways in which the knowledge of the *brahman* (i e , the self) may be achieved

'*Vidhāh*' refers to 'elements', such as the manner of meditating on the self as not an agent. The *brahman* is the self in its pure state of similarity with the Supreme *Brahman*. The *jñāna* relating to the self is that which culminates in a realisation of the equality of all selves (*Raktā*). See the introduction to Chapter V (p 129)

योगस्यासिद्धिर्योगी चतुर्धा योगसाधनम् ।

योगसिद्धिस्त्वयोगस्य पारम्यं षष्ठ उच्यते ॥ १० ॥

10. The process of practising the yoga of meditation and mental concentration, the four varieties of (successful) yogins, the means for (success in the practice of) yoga, (the certainty of) success in yoga and the supremacy of the yoga relating to Himself are taught in the sixth (chapter)

The means for success in yoga are such things as practice and dispassion 'Yogasiddhi' refers to such statements as are found in verses 40-45, assuring success even to those who give up yoga without completing it (Raktā)

स्वयाथात्म्यं प्रकृत्यास्य तिरोचिश्शरणागतिः ।

भक्तभेदः प्रबुद्धस्य श्रेष्ठं सप्तम उच्यते ॥ ११ ॥

11 In the seventh (chapter) are taught the truth about Himself, His obstruction by the prakṛti, trustful refuge in God as the means for clearing this obscuration, the varieties of devotees and the superiority of the man of wisdom among them

See the introductions to Chapters VII and VIII, page 175 and 201

ऐश्वर्याक्षरयाथात्म्यभगवच्चरणाधिनाम् ।

वेद्योपादेयभावानामष्टमे भेद उच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

12 The varieties relating to the things that are to be known and those that have to be adopted (severally) by the seekers after supramundane sovereignty, the true nature of the indestructible (self in its pure state), and the feet of God are mentioned in the eighth (chapter)

'Aśvarya' stands for power and enjoyment exceeding that of Indra, Brahmā and others. The things that are to be known are mentioned in verses 3 to 5. The things to be adopted are the meditation on the Lord, deathbed meditation, and meditation on the path of the soul after death these have to be in accordance with the objectives of the different classes of devotees.

स्वमाहात्म्यं मनुष्यत्वे परत्वं च महात्मनाम् ।

विशेषो नवमे योगो भक्तिरूपः प्रकीर्तितः ॥ १३ ॥

13. In the ninth (chapter) are well expounded His own (unique) greatness, (His) undiminished divinity in (His) incarnations as man, the high worth of great souls (who seek only God-attainment) and the discipline which consists of devotion (to God).

See the introduction to Chapter IX, p. 223

स्वकल्याणगुणानन्त्यकृत्स्नस्वाधीनतामति ।

भक्त्युत्पत्तिविवृध्यर्था बिस्तीर्णा दशमोदिता ॥ १४ ॥

14 What is dealt with extensively in the tenth (chapter), in order to instil and develop devotion (to the Lord), is the knowledge relating to His own auspicious qualities being infinite and all things being under His control

See the introductions to Chapters X and XI, p. 260 and p. 276

एकादशे स्वयायात्म्यसाक्षात्कारावलोकनम् ।

दत्तमुक्त विदिप्राप्त्योर्भक्त्येकोपायता तथा ॥ १५ ॥

15 In the eleventh (chapter) the eye which can see is direct vision of Him as He is in Himself is given (to Arjuna) and accordingly, it is taught that the only means of knowing and attaining (Him) is devotion

See the introduction to Chapter XII, p. 306 'Avalokanam' is explained by the *Rakṣā* 'as the instrument of seeing', that is, the divine eye mentioned in stanza 8 'Uktam' in the second line is the usual South Indian reading, and it presents some difficulties. Perhaps it needs to be emended to 'uktā' *Bhakti* is stated to be the means for knowledge and attainment, it is implied that it is also the means for direct vision, as taught in XI 54

भक्तेश्चैष्ठ्यमुपायोक्तिरक्षात्स्वात्मनिष्ठता ।

तत्प्रकारास्त्वतिप्रीतिर्भक्ते द्वादश उच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

16 The superiority of devotion, the means for its adoption, the practice of meditation on the self by one proving unequal (to devotion), the details regarding the qualities to be acquired by him and the exceeding love (of the Lord) for the devotee are taught in the twelfth (chapter)

See the introduction to Chapter XII, p. 306

देहस्वरूपमात्माप्तिहेतुरात्मविशोधनम् ।

बन्धहेतुविवेकश्च त्रयोदश उदीर्यते ॥ १७ ॥

17 The essential nature of the body, the means for self realisation examination of the nature of the self, the cause of bondage and discriminatory knowledge (relating to the self and the body) are (all) expounded in the thirteenth (chapter)

See the introduction to Chapter XIII, p 319

गुणबन्धविधा तेषा कर्तृत्व तन्निवर्तनम् ।

गतित्रयस्वमूलत्व चतुर्दश उदीर्यते ॥ १८ ॥

18 In the fourteenth (chapter) are expounded the various ways in which the gunas (of the prakṛti) bind (the self), their responsibility for all activities, escape from them and Himself being the foundation for all the three goals (of supramundane sovereignty the self in its pure state and God-attainment)

See the introductions to Chapters XIV and XV, p 358 and p 377

अचिन्मिथाद्विशुद्धाच्च चेतनात्पुरुषोत्तम ।

व्यापनाद्भूराणात्स्वाम्यादन्य पञ्चदशोदित ॥ १९ ॥

19 The Highest Person is declared in the fifteenth (chapter) to be other than the self when in its state of pristine purity and when in association with the prakṛti, because of His pervading, sustaining and ruling over (them)

See the introduction to Chapter XV, p 377

देवासुरविभागोक्तिपूर्विका शास्त्रवश्यता ।

तत्त्वानुष्ठानविज्ञानस्थेऽग्ने षोडश उच्यते ॥ २० ॥

20 With the object of firmly establishing the discriminatory knowledge relating to truth and to conduct, submission to the śāstras is taught in the sixteenth (chapter) after making known the distinction between the divine and demoniacal (creations)

See the introduction to Chapter XVI, p 395

अशास्त्रमासुर कृत्स्न शास्त्रीय गुणतः पृथक् ।

लक्षण शास्त्रसिद्धस्य त्रिधा सप्तदशोदितम् ॥ २१ ॥

21 All that is not ordained by the *śāstras* is demoniacal what is enjoined in the *śāstras* is varied, according to the *gunas*, and the characterisation of what is established in the *śāstras* is threefold (as being connected with the three words, 'Om tat sat') (all) this is dealt with in the seventeenth (chapter)

See the introduction to Chapter XVII, p 410

ईश्वरे कर्तृताबुद्धिस्सत्त्वोपादेयतान्तिमे ।

स्वकर्मपरिणामश्च शास्त्रसारायं उच्यते ॥ २२ ॥

22 In the last (chapter) are taught the state of mind attributing the agency (of one's actions) to the Lord, the desirability of adopting the *sattva-guna*, the culminating result of the performance of one's duties (being God-attainment) and the essence of the *śāstras* (namely, *bhakti-yoga*)

See the introduction to Chapter XVIII, p 427

In the ten verses that remain, Śrī Yāmuna deals with the characteristics of the three *yogas*, their interrelations and such miscellaneous matters. He concludes with again drawing attention to the essence of the *śāstras*.

कर्मयोगस्तपस्तीर्थदानयज्ञादिसेवनम् ।

ज्ञानयोगो जितस्वान्तः परिशुद्धात्मनि स्थितिः ॥ २३ ॥

23 *Karma-yoga* is resorting to penance, sacred rivers, almsgiving, performance of sacrifices and such other things. *Jñāna-yoga* is the abundance (through ceaseless meditation) in the pure self by those who have controlled their minds.

भक्तियोगः परैकान्तप्रीत्या ध्यानादिषु स्थितिः ।

24 *Bhakti-yoga* is abundance in such things as meditation with one-pointed devotion to the Supreme Being.

The one-pointed devotion extends up to exclusion of devotion to all the other (minor) gods (*Rakṣā*)

त्रयाणामपि योगानां त्रिभिरन्योन्यसङ्गमः ॥ २४ ॥

24 There is association with one another, so far as the three *yogas* are concerned

नित्यनैमित्तिकानां च पराराधनरूपिणाम् ।

आत्मदृष्टेस्त्रयोऽप्येते योगद्वारेण साधकाः ॥ २५ ॥

25 There is also association of these three (*yogas*) with obligatory and occasional works, taking the form of the worship of the Supreme Being. All these (*yogas*) serve as the means for the vision of the self through *yoga*.

In any one of the three *yogas* the elements of the other two are present. For instance, in *karma-yoga*, meditation on the self and loving devotion to God are included, its name derives from the pre-dominant component. The *Rakṣā* cites the example of a mixture of milk and sugar, which can be called syrup or milk according as the one or the other is the principal ingredient.

The *yoga* by which the direct vision of the self is gained is one-pointed concentration of the mind. This vision is mentioned in connection with the devotee also, because devotion has several stages. No doubt, there are some who practise *bhakti-yoga* after gaining a vision of the self. But others have devotion which manifests itself in such forms as praising the Lord, hearing His glories and bowing down before Him in temples. These have yet to gain the vision of the self.

निरस्तनिखिलज्ञानो दृष्ट्वात्मानं परानुगम् ।

प्रतिलभ्य परां भक्तिं तयैवाप्नोति तत्पदम् ॥ २६ ॥

26 One whose ignorance has been completely removed, after seeing the self directly as subservient to the Supreme Being, gets eminent devotion (through His grace) and attains His feet.

The three *yogas* bring about, through the vision of the self, the supreme devotion which is the direct means for the attainment of God. See XVIII 51-56. The *Rakṣā* explains that *para-bhakti* (eminent devotion) gets transformed into *parama-bhakti* (supreme devotion) and then secures God-attainment. 'Tat-padam', rendered as 'His feet,' may also mean 'His Heaven' or 'His essential nature'.



भक्तियोगस्तदर्थी चेत्समग्रैश्वर्यसाधकः ।

आत्मार्या चेत्त्रयोऽप्येते तत्कैवल्यस्य साधकाः ।

37 *Bhakti-yoga is the means for all-comprehending sovereignty, if one desires it. If one desires the self, all these three yogas serve as the means for attaining its experience in self-sufficient isolation.*

The different results of the discipline of devotion according to the objectives of the different classes of devotees, mentioned in Chapter VII, are here pointed out. Note that the paths of *karma* and *jāna* can lead to the attainment of *kaivalya*, but God-attainment is possible only through *bhakti-yoga*.

एकान्त्य भगवत्प्रेषा समानमधिकारिणाम् ।

यावत्प्राप्ति परार्थी चेत्तदेवात्यन्तमश्नुते ॥ २८ ॥

38 *Exclusiveness in regard to the Lord (as the object of worship) is common to all these qualified aspirants. But if one desires (the attainment of) the Supreme Being till (such) attainment (without longing for other things), he will enjoy (Him) without end.*

The distinction of the devotee who has no objective other than God is mentioned here. By way of giving further particulars about such a devotee, Śrī Yāmuna shows in the concluding four stanzas that the *Gītā* is essentially an authoritative religious treatise teaching the way to salvation.

ज्ञानी तु परमैकान्ती तदायत्तात्मजीवन ।

तत्संश्लेषवियोगैकसुखदुःखस्तदेकधीः ॥ २९ ॥

39 *The man of wisdom (among the devotees) is indeed foremost among those exclusively devoted (to the Lord). The life of his self is dependent on Him. He has no joy and sorrow other than union with and separation from Him. His thought rests in Him alone.*

The union and separation mentioned respectively refer to engaging in worship, meditation and such other activities enjoined by the scriptures, and being not so engaged.

भगवद्ध्यानयोगोक्तिवन्दनस्तुतिकीर्तनैः ।

सम्बात्मा तद्गतप्राणमनोबुद्धीन्द्रियक्रियः ॥ ३० ॥

30 He feels that he has gained his self (only) through meditation on the Lord, direct vision (of Him through such meditation), teaching (about Him), bowing down (before Him in temples etc.), praising (His auspicious qualities) and reciting (His) names. The activities of his senses, will, intellect and vital energies are concentrated on Him

'Yoga' may also mean pilgrimage to holy places or worship of the Lord, 'Ukti' is literally 'speech', but rendered as 'teaching' 'Manobuddhi' may also be taken as the mind functioning as the will. The devotee becomes *labdhātmā*, one who gains his self, in the sense that otherwise he considers himself lost (*Rakṣā*)

निजकर्मादि भक्त्यन्त कुर्यात्प्रीत्यैव कारित ।

उपायता परित्यज्य न्यस्येद्देवतु तामभी ॥ ३१ ॥

31 He should perform all things from his own duties to the practice of devotion, getting them done solely through love (for God). Giving up (the view of finding in them) the character of being the means (for final release), he must place it (i.e., being the means) in God, and be rid of all fear

The duties enjoined by the *śāstras* are carried out by him out of love and devotion, and not because they have been enjoined in commandments. The *Rakṣā* points out that God is called 'deva' here in order to remind us about *S'vet Up* (VI 18) where *prapatti* is taught

Placing 'upāyatā' in the Lord can be taken to indicate *prapatti* also

एकान्तात्यन्तदास्यैकरतिस्तत्पदमाप्नुयात् ।

तत्प्रधानमिदं शास्त्रमिति गीतार्थसङ्ग्रह ॥ ३२ ॥

32. He finds his sole delight in exclusive and never-ending service (to God). He attains His feet. This authoritative religious work is concerned principally with such a devotee (and his goal of final release). Such is a summary of the purport of the *Gītā*

The *Rakṣā* explains that Śrī Yāmuna must be here regarded as claiming that the summary given above has the authority of both truth and tradition behind it. For he himself was taught the *Gītā* by Rāmanuśra, obeying the behests of Nāthamuni.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED

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- Ah S — Ahirbudhya Samhitā  
At Ār — Atareya Āranyaka  
Āp D S — Āpastamba-Dharma-Sūtra  
B G — Bhagavadgītā  
B P — Bhāva-prakāśikā of Rangarāmānuja  
Bṛh Up — Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.  
Chānd Up — Chāndogya Upaniṣad.  
Ch Up — Chāndogya Upaniṣad  
Cū Up — Cūlikā Upaniṣad  
Gaut D S — Gautama-Dharma-Sūtras  
G S — Gitārtha-saṅgraha of Yāmunāchārya  
Kath Up — Kathopaniṣad  
Kāt Sr S — Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtras  
Kausb Up — Kausītaki Upaniṣad.  
L G — 'Lectures on the *Bhagavadgītā*' by Prof M Rangacharya  
(in 3 volumes)  
M B — Mahābhārata  
Mādh Bṛh Up — Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Mādhyandina recension  
Mahā N — Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad (Taittirīya)  
M Nār — Mahānārāyaṇa Up (Taittirīya)  
Manu — Manu-Smṛti  
Muṇḍ Up — Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad  
Pāṇini — Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini  
P M — Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā Sūtras of Jaimini  
Rām — Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki  
R V — R̥gveda Samhitā  
Śat. Br — Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa  
S B — Śrībhāṣya of Rāmānuja (Page references are to the English  
translation by M Rangacharya and M. B. Varadaraja  
Iyengar in 3 volumes)

S.P.—*Śrutaprakāśikā* of Sudarśana

Sub. Up.—*Subāla Upaniṣad*.

S.V.—*Sāma-veda*.

Śvet Up.—*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*

Taitt Ār.—*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*

Taitt Br.—*Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*

Taitt Nār.—*Mahānārāyaṇa Up (Taittirīya)*

Taitt Sam.—*Taittirīya Saṃhitā*

Taitt. Up.—*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*

T C.—*Tātparyachandrikā* of Vedānta Deśika

V.P. Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Yog Sūt.—*Yogasūtra* of Patañjali

The names of other works from which quotations appear are given in full. These comprise *Ādhikaraṇasārāvalī* of Vedānta Deśika, B G Tilak's *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*, *Garuda Purāṇa*, *Tattvasāra* of Vātsyā Varada, *Nārasimhapurāṇa*, *Nighaṇṭu*, *Nirukta* of Yāska, *Nyāyatattva* of Nāthamuni, *The Brahma-vādin* (a periodical), *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad*, *Laṅgottara Purāṇa*, *Viṣṇupañjara*, *Vedārthasaṅgraha*, *Sāttvata Saṃhitā*, *Sāṅkhya Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, and *Vedānta Sūtras*

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# GLOSSARIAL INDEX

## OF

## SANSKRIT WORDS AND PROPER NAMES

(Arranged according to the Sanskrit Alphabet)

N B—Only words requiring explanation are listed

n=note

*Akrūra* a close relative of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and His devotee, 3

*apātitaun* those from whom the principle of life cannot depart, that is, the souls 20

*Agnihotra* an obligation to Agni, chiefly of milk, oil and sour gruel, 239, 436, 437

*Agniṣomiya* a sacrifice in honour of Agni and Soma

*Agniṣoma* a protracted sacrifice extending over several days in the spring and forming part of *Jyotiṣoma*, 234,

*Angiras* a celebrated sage to whom some hymns of the *Rgveda* are ascribed, He is one of the seven *ṛṣis* and a Prajāpati, 255

*Atala* a world beneath the earth, 282.

*atyanta* beyond expression, 190.

*Ati* a great sage and the author of a number of Vedic hymns He is identified with one of the stars in the Great Bear, 255

*Atharva veda*: the fourth *Veda*, so called because it is attributed to Atharvan, 284 n.

*Advaita* the school of monistic *Vedānta*, of which Śaṅkarāchārya is the greatest

*Advaitins* followers of *Advaita*, *passim*.

*apārva*: a remote effect of a religious rite, 79.

*Anantaviyaya* 'endlessly victorious,' name of Yudhiṣṭhira's conch, 7.

*anna* that which is eaten, food, 78.

*anumaraṇa* continuous remembrance, 206 n

*Ananta* a celebrated thousand-headed serpent who is regarded as the emblem of infinity or endless time. he forms the couch of Viṣṇu Sometimes he is represented as bearing the universe on one of his heads, 269, 401

*anapekṣya* without relying on, irrespective of, 447 n.

*anantarūpaḥ* of boundless form, 284 n

*anṛta* falsehood, that which is not permanent, hence changeable matter, 327

*anumantṛ* one who permits, 350 n dwelling within

body, 414 n.

*Anicā* . *nyojitaḥ*. though unwilling, as if incited after being forcibly beaten, 95 n.

*apārītya*. having recourse to, 469 n.

*apunarītya* the state from which there is no return, 140 n.

*apṛthakoddāha* wherein, of two things, there can be no separate existence for either The term is usually applied to an inseparable attribute, 266 n.

*Abhimanyu*. son of Arjuna and a famous hero in the war fought at Kurukṣetra. He is led into a trap and slain treacherously in battle, 7.

- Ambarīṣa* a king of the solar race, famous as a devotee of Viṣṇu, 101 n
- Aśiṣa* a demon who mingled among Kṛṣṇa's herds in the form of a bull. He was killed by Kṛṣṇa. See *V P* (V 14), 3.
- Aryuṇa* the third among the Pāṇḍava princes. The *Gītā* is taught to him by Kṛṣṇa, *passim*
- aryuṇa trees* two trees which grow side by side near the mansion of Kṛṣṇa. The child Kṛṣṇa brought them down by dragging between them a mortar to which he was tied. Two demigods, Maṇuṅgriva and Nalakūbara, emerged from them. They had been cursed to become trees (*Bhāgavata*, X 10)
- Aryama* the chief of the manes, 269
- arīhaṇḍa* explanatory remarks on the meaning of Vedic hymns and the purposes of rites, comprising eulogies, allegories, fables, etc., 432 n
- Ami ca te dm* These (enter) You, 290 n
- Ami sarve* all these, 290 n
- ambuṣraṇḍāḥ* streams of water, 291 n
- ambureṇḍā* streams of water, 291 n
- ananta* that which is not real or substantial, 27 n
- avidyā* nescience, 24 n
- avyābhūtamahāgrāhī* undisturbed and one-pointed, 185 n
- avyabhāṅgī* not swerving, 462 n
- avyayabhedas* an indeclinable compound word, 371 n.
- avatīkṣa* the holy fig tree, 289, 378, 380.
- Avatīkṣman* the son of Droṇa and the last commander-in-chief of Duryodhana's army, 5, 6
- Ācārya* an ancient exemplar among kings in spiritual practices. He is mentioned in *Ch. Up*. In *M B*, one king of the name is the father of Sāvitrī, who fights the god of death for the soul of her husband, 101 n
- asatyā* unreal, unenduring, 27 n
- Asita* an ancient sage, sometimes spoken of as the father of Devala, to whom some Vedic hymns are attributed, 102
- asthāgayoga* concentrated meditation in eight stages, taught in Patañjali's famous aphorisms, 146 n
- Asuras* demons, those of an evil disposition, 186, 231-31 n
- Āsuras* two gods who are physicians 279, 286
- akāśa* the Lord, in the sense of one who is luminous to Himself and causes other things to shine, 292 n
- Āgneya* one among the full moon and new moon sacrifices; it is in honour of Agni to whom offerings are made in 8 clay cups, 45 n
- ācāryas* preceptors, particularly those like Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Śaṅkara, 79 n
- ātmanepada* lit. word to oneself, that form of the verb which implies an action belonging or referring to oneself 76 n, 373 n, 381 n
- Adi Bharata* the 'first' Bharata, a king three of whose incarnations are described in the *Purāṇas*. In the first he is called Ādi Bharata and in the third the inert or Jaḍa Bharata. Birth as a deer intervened between these two. The spiritual progress made by austerities and meditation in the first birth is remembered during the second and helps further progress in the third, 206, 333 n
- Ānandagiri* a scholiast on Śrī Śaṅkara's works, *passim*
- Āyurveda* the science of longevity, that is, the medical science which is included among sacred studies, 415 n
- āśrama* one of the four religiously sanctioned stages of life—those of the student, the householder, the wandering hermit and the ascetic, 46
- Ikṣvaku* a son of Vāivasvata Manu and the first king of the solar dynasty at Ayodhya, 101

*Indra* epic as traditional history, 325  
*Indra* the chief of the minor gods  
*passim*.

*Uccasravas* lit that which neighs aloud,  
 Indra's horse, 269

*Uttamañjas* a famous archer hailing from  
 Pāṇchāla, 6

*Upāśā* a full-moon sacrifice in honour  
 of Agni and Soma and consisting in  
 the offering of ghee, 45 n

*upāśāna* worship of the Lord, particu-  
 larly through loving meditation,  
 65, 176 n, 188 n 473

*Uśmapas* lit those who imbibe the  
 steam of hot food, the manes, 288

*vrāṇas* lit that which is situated high  
 above, 378 n

*Ṛgveda* the first of the four *Vedas*,  
*passim*

*śākā* one who lives alone without any  
 companion, 154 n

*Evamvādha* lit of such a kind, in such  
 form or manner, 364 n

*Andras* two sacrifices to be performed  
 on the new-moon day, one by offering  
 curds, and the other by offering milk,  
 45 n

*Andrāgna* a new-moon sacrifice consist-  
 ing in the offering of curds in 8 clay  
 cups to Indra and Agni, 45 n

*Aśvātata* the elephant of Indra produced  
 at the churning of the ocean and the  
 prototype of the elephant species, 269

*Om* a sacred syllable understood to  
 denote the Supreme Being, *passim*.

*aupadha* herbs used in medicine, 234 n

*Kaśida* the founder of the *Valīśika*  
 system, 463 n

*Kāmarpa* the god of love, 269

*Kapila* a great *Siddha*, 269 the founder  
 of the *Sāṅkhya* system, 400 n, 430 n,  
 443 n

*kamalapatrākṣa* one whose eyes are  
 like the petals of a lotus, i.e., Kṛṣṇa,

*Karna* an elder brother of Yudhiṣṭhira,  
 disowned by his mother, brought up  
 by a charioteer and patronised by  
 Duryodhana, he is famous for his  
 munificence and his skill as an archer  
 6, 41, 290

*karma-kāṇḍa* the ritualistic portion of  
 the *Vedas*, 473 n

*karma phala* the fruits of rituals, or the  
 impressed tendencies derived from  
 activities in previous births, 208 n,  
 235 n

*Karmin* one engaged in *karmayoga*

*kālā* a measure of time equal to 510  
 twinklings of the eye, 292 n

*Kālā* the name of the fourth or iron age  
 among the four *yugas*, 214 n

*kavya* an offering or oblation to the  
 manes, 242 n

*Kamea* the tyrant uncle whom Kṛṣṇa  
 killed, 3, 302

*kāṅkṣā* desires, 466 n

*kāmya-karmas* rites intended for the  
 satisfaction of desires, 429 n,  
 435 n

*Kālāya* a poisonous snake driven out of  
 the Yamunā by Kṛṣṇa, 3

*Kāśī* one of the holiest of Indian cities  
 it is on the Gaṅgā in modern Uttar  
 Pradesh its king is one of the leaders  
 of the Pāṇḍava army, 6, 7

*Kimpuruṣas* mythological beings, half  
 human and half animal, supposed  
 to be the attendants of Kubera, 295

*Kinnaras* demigods, half human and  
 half horse, believed to be skilled in  
 music, 295

*Kuntībhōja* the adoptive father of Kuntī,  
 6

*Kuntī* the mother of Arjuna, *passim*

*Kubera*: the god of wealth, 268.

*Kumārila* a great authority on the *Pāras Mīmāṃsā*, 400 n.

*Kuru*: an ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas and their cousins, *passim*.

*Kurukṣetra* the holy plains on which the Bharata war was fought. It is 100 miles north of Delhi, near Panipat, the scene of many other decisive battles in Indian history. It derives its name from Kuru, 6, 389 n.

*Kūvalayāpida* a terrible elephant of Kamsa. it was killed by Kṛṣṇa, 3

*kūśmāṇḍa* an expiatory ceremony, 476

*Kṛta* the first of the four *yugas*, the golden age, 106, 214 n.

*Kṛpa* a brother in law of Droṇa and a preceptor of the Pāṇḍavas and their cousins in archery, 6

*Kṛśṇa* an epithet of Kṛṣṇa, meaning one with glorious hair or the lord of Brahmā and Śiva, *passim*

*Kṛśṇa* a demon and follower of Kamsa who appeared before Kṛṣṇa in the form of a wild horse and was killed by Him, 3, 428

*kṛpalya* final release in the form of experience of the self in self-sufficient isolation, 199, 203 n.

*Kuntī* Arjuna as the son of Kuntī, *passim*

*Kṛtā* a daughter of Dakṣa, one of the wives of Kāśyapa and the mother of Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, 268 n

*Gaṇḍharvas* demigods believed to be experts in music, 269, 27.

*Garuḍa* a mythical bird supposed to be the vehicle of Viṣṇu, 270

*Gāṇḍīva*: the bow of Arjuna, 12

*Gāyatrī*: a Vedic metre, famous on account of a well known prayer composed in it, 272.

*Gārgī*: a lady who participates in philosophical discussions in *Bṛh. Up.*, 227.

*Gudāhastā*: a name of Arjuna: literally, it means one who has conquered sleep or has a profusion of hair, *passim*. *guṇas*: the three 'qualities' of the *prakṛti*, namely, the *satva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas*, *passim*

*Govinda*: a name of Kṛṣṇa, literally it means the finder or protector of cows, *passim*

*Uśāra* a wrestler of Kamsa he was killed by Kṛṣṇa, 3

*cāndrāyana* an expiatory ceremony, see 120 n

*Āśvatas*: materialists, 400 n

*cittāgrā* one-pointedness of the mind, 473 n

*Cekitāna* an army chief on the Pāṇḍava side he belonged to the Vṛṣṇi clan of Kṛṣṇa, 6

et al, 245 n.

*Jana* the fifth of the seven upper worlds, where the sons of Brahmā and deified mortals reside, 214 n.

*Janaka* a famous king of Mithilā who figures in the *Upaśāda* as interested in the problems of religion and philosophy, 82, 101 n

*janmābhaya-karma-phala-pradāh* giving the results of *karma* known as birth, 47 n

*Jandādana* a name of Kṛṣṇa it means the destroyer, *passim*

*japa-yajña*: meditation accompanied by the inaudible muttering of a prayer-formula and regarded as an act of worship, 419 n

*Jayaśrītha*: the author of a subcommentary on Śrī Madhva's commentary on the *Gītā*, *passim*.

*Jayadratha*: the husband of Duryodhana's sister, Duśhalā. he played a leading part in the treacherous killing of Abhimanyu and was killed by Arjuna, 294 n.



*Jahnvi* daughter of Jahnu. The word stands for the Gangā, as she was swallowed by the sage Jahnu and then let out through his ears, 270

*jñāna* one who seeks knowledge, 169 n.

*Jyāśāddhikaraṇa* the first section of the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, dealing with the desire to know (the *Brahman*), 323 n

*jīva* the individual self, 24 n.

*jīvanmukta* one who, according to the teachings of Śrī Śaṅkara, has realised non dualism and become emancipated even while being alive, 161 n

*Jiṭṭha* 2nd person singular of the periphrastic future of 'ji', to conquer 294 n

*jeyam* 2nd person singular of the simple future of 'ji', to conquer, 294 n

*Jainas* followers of Jina Vardhamāna, a contemporary of the Buddha, in religion and philosophy, 400 n

*Jyotiṣoma* a soma sacrifice, 234, 436, 443

*j-ūtākkāram* of the form of what is known, 364 n

*jñāna-yajña* the sacrifice of knowledge, 236 n

*jñeyam* that which is to be known, 340 n, 343 n

*śaipurusa* a class of compounds in which the last member is important and preserves its original character while being qualified by the first member, the word, itself meaning 'his servant' being an example, 271 n.

*tanu* body, form, manifestation, 194 n

*tanmātras* the subtle bases of the physical elements, 25, 190 n., 336 n.

*tamas*, *tamoguna* that quality of the *prakṛti* which makes matter dull and inert, *passim*.

*taṁgā ārdhānarāḥ* his worship, 194 n.

*taṁgā devatānarāḥ ārdhānarāḥ* the worship of that form of the deity, 194 n.

*taṁgā rādhānarāḥ* her worship, 194 n.

*Takṣaka* a mythological snake, 283

*timira*: a disease of the eye in which objects appear double or multiple, 23, 23 n

*tilaka* a mark on the forehead between the eyebrows made with coloured earths, sandal paste or unguents as an ornament and a sign of auspiciousness, 285

*trivi* an expiatory ceremony, 476.

*trina* the instrumental singular of the third personal pronoun, *ted*, in masculine or neuter, meaning 'by or with it or him', 422 n

*taṁgasa* a variety of the *akṣhār*, 336 n

*tyat* undifferentiated primary matter which is capable of undergoing transformations at all times, 328

*Tretā* the second of the four *yugas*, the silver age, 106, 214 n

*darśanāḥ* seeing, vision, 339 n

*dhṛti* a daughter of Dakṣa, wife of Kāśyapa and the mother of *Aśvina*, 270

*Duryodhana* cousin of the Pāṇḍavas and their enemy, *passim*

*Devaki* mother of Kṛṣṇa, 303 n

*Devadatta* name of Arjuna's coach, 7, 8, a name used in Sanskrit to indicate some one, 380

*Drupada*: King of Pāñchāla and father of Draupadī, 6, 7.

*Droṇa* preceptor of the Pāṇḍavas in archery and one of the commanders of Duryodhana's army, 6, 8, 9, 16, 280, 283.

*Draupadī* the wife of the Pāṇḍavas, 6, 7

*Dvāpara* the third *yuga* or the bronze age, 214 n

*Dvārakā*, *Dvāravātī*: Kṛṣṇa's city in Saurashtra, 260, 261.

*Dvaita* 'dualism', the school of *Vedānta* expounded by Śrī Mādhva where the universe is analysed into God, a plurality of selves and innumerable

- particles of matter, with fundamental differences among the different categories and among members of each category, *passim*.
- Dhananjaya* Arjuna as the conqueror of wealth, *passim*
- Dharma-śāstras* authoritative works dealing with duties and rituals, 409
- Dhṛtarāṣṭra* uncle of the Pāṇḍavas and the father of Duryodhana, *passim*
- Dhṛṣṭakēśu* King of Chedi and son of Śiśupala, his sister married Nakula, 6
- Dhṛṣṭadyumna* brother of Draupadī and the commander-in-chief of the Pāṇḍava army, 7
- Dhenuka* a demon killed by Kṛṣṇa, 3
- Dhauṃya* preceptor of the Pāṇḍavas, 261 n
- Nakula* the fourth of the Pāṇḍava brothers, 7
- Nāthamuni* the grandfather of Śrī Yāmuna and the first modern teacher of Viṣṇūbhāgavata, 168 n
- Nārada* a divine sage, 102, 172 n, 255 n, 259, 260, 269
- Nārāyaṇa* a name of God, *passim*
- Nārāyaṇīya* a commentator on the *Gītā*, 195 n, 290 n
- niṃśepa* twinklings of the eye, regarded as units of time, 104
- svartakāṇupapatti* 'the inconsistency in relation to the remover (of *avidyā*)' one of the seven objections to *Advaita* formulated by Śrī Rāmānuja under *S. B* (I 1 1), 323 n
- Naiyāyika* relating to the Nyāya system of philosophy, 35 n
- pañca-mahā-yejñāḥ* five great sacrifices or important acts of worship in *Mānu* (III. 69-71), they are described as connected severally with the Vedas, the gods, the manes, men and all created beings, 72 n
- pañcasindh* the five things in a house by which animal life may be accidentally destroyed—the fire-place, the slab on which condiments are ground, the broom, the pestle and mortar and the waterpot, 77 n
- Pañāṇjale* the founder of the *Yoga* system and the author of the *Yogasūtra*, *passim*, author of an extensive commentary on Pāṇini, 266 n
- para-dharma* the duty of another, 94 n
- Parantapa* the tormentor of enemies, Arjuna is sometimes addressed thus, *passim*
- paramāṇupada* 'word to, or for another', a form of the verb used with reference to actions for the benefit of others than the agent, 373 n, 381 n, 467 n
- Parāmasu samā mati* an equal mind in regard to other souls, 152 n
- Parāśara* author of *P' P*, and father of Vyāsa, *passim*
- Parāśara Bhāṣa* author of a commentary on "The Prayer of a Thousand Names," 424 n
- pavitṛkṣa* an expiatory ceremony, 476
- Pāñcājanya* Name of Kṛṣṇa's conch 7, 8
- Pāñcārātra* a system of Vaiṣṇava worship and philosophy, 248 n
- Pātāla* the nethermost of the seven nether worlds, 282
- Pāṇḍavas* sons of Pāṇḍu, *passim*
- Pāṇḍu* father of Arjuna and brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 84
- Pārtha* Arjuna as the son of Prthā, *passim*
- purāṇa* works of legendary history and cosmological speculation they are said to deal with five topics—evolution of primordial matter, creation of form, possessing conscious and unconscious beings, the genealogy of the gods, etc., the periods of time called *manvantaras* and the history of dynasties of kings 32, 323

- Puruṣa* brother of Kuṁṁ, 6  
*puruṣa-paśha* 'bull among men', an epithet of Arjuna, 26 n.  
*Puruṣa-vyāghra* 'tiger among men', an epithet of Arjuna, 430, 475  
*Pulastya*, *Pulaha* mind-born sons of Brahmā, included among the Prajāpatis and the seven sages, 255 n  
*Pūtana* a demoness killed by Kṛṣṇa, 3  
*Prithā* mother of Arjuna, *passim*  
*Puruṣa* an enemy of Kṛṣṇa, 7  
*Prajāpatis* 'lords of created beings', first created by Brahmā to help in the work of creation, *passim*  
*Prabhākara* a commentator on the *Purva-mīmāṃsā*, 400 n  
*Pralamba* a demon killed by Balarama, Kṛṣṇa's brother, 3  
*Pracāyana* a king of Pāṇḍala in 'Ch Up', 203 n  
*Prāṣaṇa* a morning libation of soma, accompanied with ten ceremonial observances, 24 n  
  
*Bakuvrīṇ* an attributive compound, in which the last member loses its independence as well as its original grammatical character and serves only to qualify another, the word itself, meaning 'possessing much rice', providing an example, 157 n, 224 n, 271 n, 473 n  
*Badarikāśrama* a shrine on the Himālayas sacred to Nārāyaṇa, 261 n  
*buddhi-yoga* association with a state or disposition of mind, or a state of mind conducive to union with the Lord, 258 n, 469  
*Bṛhat-sāman* a famous song of the *Sāma-sāda* in the *bṛhatī* metre See *Taitt Saṁh* (VII 1 1 4) about its greatness, 372  
*Bṛhaspati* the preceptor and priest of the gods, 268  
*Bodhayaṇta* those who teach, 257 n  
  
*Buddhas* Buddhists, 400 n  
*brahmachāri-vrata* the vow of celibacy, 156 n  
*Bharata* the emperor from whom Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra were descended, 9, 97 (*Jāḍa*) see *Adi Bharata*, 333 n.  
*Bharata-sattama* Arjuna as the best of the descendants of Bharata, 429, 430  
*Bharata-paśha* the bull among the descendants of Bharata, that is, Arjuna, 183, 189, 353, 367, 475  
*Bhārata* Arjuna as a descendant of Bharata, 18, 25, 29, 36, 37, 85  
*Bharata-treṣṭha* the best among the descendants of Bharata, 417  
*bhāṣya* the commentary (of Śrī Rāmānuja on the *Gītā*), 20 n, 241 n, 473 n  
*Bhāṣaka* a philosopher who held that the *Brahman* is both different and non different from the individual self, *passim*  
*Bhīma* the second among the Pāṇḍava brothers, 7, 9 n  
*Bhīma* grand uncle of Arjuna and Duryodhana and commander in chief of Duryodhana's army, *passim*  
*bhuvāloka* the second of the seven upper worlds, 214 n, 392 n  
*bhūtamaheśvara* God as the great lord of all beings, 355 n  
*bhūloka* the earth, 392 n  
*Bṛgu* one of the ten *prajāpatis* created by the first Manu, one of the seven great sages, 255, 268, 436  
*Bhedābheda* a system of philosophy wherein the *Brahman* is held to be both different and non different from the individual self, 340 n  
  
*Makara* a kind of sea monster, 270  
*Manipuṣpaka* Sahadeva's conch, 7  
*Madhurā* a city near modern Delhi where Kṛṣṇa was born, 261  
*Madhusūdana* Kṛṣṇa as an incarnation of the Lord who slew the demon, Madhu, *passim*

*Madhva* the great exponent of the *Dvaita* school of *Vedānta*, *passim*

*manana* reflection over the teaching heard (on the Lord and the self) with a view to fix it in the mind, 66 n.

*manas* the mind, particularly the faculty of attention, 97, 98, 267, 336, 439 n  
*manah prānendriya kṛyāḥ* the activities of the mind, the vital airs and the senses, 452 n

*Manu* one of the fourteen progenitors of living beings and rulers of the universe during a *kalpa*, *passim* the seventh *Manu* who is the son of the sun-god and ruling at the present time, 100, 101

*mantra* a formula sacred to God in a particular form or to any god, a prayer or hymn addressed to a deity and revealed to a seer, 268 n

*man-mayāḥ* those whose thoughts are largely concerned with Me, 107 n

*manvantara* a *Manu*'s period, equal to, the fourteenth part of a *kalpa*, 100, 214 n.

*Marici* a *prajāpati* and a great sage 265 n., 268, the chief of the gods called *Maruts*, 266

*Maruts* gods of winds and storms, 266, 279.

*Maharloka* the fourth of the seven upper worlds, 214 n

*maharṣis* great sages, 255 n

*Mahābaddhānta*. 'the great conclusion' which establishes *Viśiṣṭadvaita* after meeting the objections of *Advaita* in *S B* (I 1. 1), 323 n

*mātrāsparśaḥ* contacts with the *mātrā*, 25 n

*Mādāhara* Kṛṣṇa as the descendant of *Madhu* or as the Lord of *Mā* (or *Lakṣmī*), 7, 13

*Mārgasīrṣa* lit that which is connected with the constellation *Mrgasīrṣa* or the Orion: the month (December-January) during which the full moon takes place in the constellation *Mrgasīrṣa*, 272

*mālākāra* lit maker of garlands a garland-marker for Kamsa and a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, 3.

*mukta* one who is liberated, 117 n  
 one who has attained salvation, 344 n

*mukha* The usual meaning is 'mouth' here used in the sense of the means, 123 n

*Muṣṭka* one of Kamsa's wrestlers killed by Kṛṣṇa, 3

*muhūrta* a measure of time equal to a thirtieth part of a day or 48 minutes, 272

*Mṛtyu* the god of death or a minion of him 272, 272 n the *prakṛti*, 326

*Medhā* lit intelligence the goddess presiding over intelligence, regarded as a consort of God, 272 steady meditation, 66

*Meru*: a mythical golden mountain, 182, 173 n, 212 n, 268, 283 n

*Maitreya* the disciple to whom *Parāśara* expounds *V P*, 111

*mokṣa* final release or salvation of the individual self, *passim*

*Mokṣa-dharma* a section of *M B* (XII), dealing with the means for attaining final release, 242

*Āyurveda* the second of the four *Vedas* 222, 235, 237, 267, 284 n.

*ajadatta* a name used to indicate any person, 390

*vatinaḥ* of those who are striving, of those who are ascetics, 145 n

*yat tat* that which, 159 n

*yatra* where, 159 n

*yadava Sāṅkhyaś patyaṁ* even that which the *Sāṅkhyas* see, 131 n.

*Yādava* Kṛṣṇa as a descendant of *Yadu*, 298, 299

*Yādavaprakāśa* a philosopher who holds the soul to be both different and non-different from the *Brahman*, *passim*.

*yugas*. epochs of the world, consisting of the *Kṛta*, the *Treta*, the *Dvāpara* and the *Kali*, aggregating in all to 4,320,000 years, *passim*

*Yudhāmanyu* a Pāñchala chief in the Pāṇḍava army, 6

*Yudhiṣṭhira* the eldest brother of Arjuna, 7, 8, 85

*Yuyudhāna* otherwise known as *Sātyaki*, a friend and kinsman of Kṛṣṇa and a leader of the Pāṇḍava army, 6.

*Yoginām* as compared with those who practise *yoga*, 172

*yogakṣāgram* one pointed on the vision of the self, 155 n

*Rahasya sthāna* staying in a solitary spot 154 n

*rajas*, *rajoḡuna* that 'quality' of the *prakṛti* which marks its highly active condition full of aggressive energy, *passim*

*Rakṣasas* demons, evil spirits, 186, 231, 231 n, 241

*rājasa* characterised by the *rajas*, 316 n  
*rājasiya* a great sacrifice, performed at the coronation of an emperor, by himself and his tributary kings, 103 n

*Rāma* an incarnation of God. His exploits are celebrated in *Rām*, 270

*Rudra* Śiva the destroyer in the Hindu Trinity, 178 n, :—s the eleven forms of Śiva, 268, 279

*Rudra Sāvareṇa* the twelfth Manu, 255 n

*Ravana* the fifth Manu, 255 n

*Rocṣa* the second Manu, 255 n

*Laḡhuuddhāna* the 'small conclusion' in which Śrī Rāmānuja establishes that *bhakti* is the means to final release in *S B* (I : 1), 449 n, 473 n

*Laṅkā*: the capital of the island kingdom of Rāvāna which was set ablaze by Hanūmat, as described in *Rām* (V), 10.

*laya* dissolution, absorption, 203 n

*Lokācārya* a famous teacher of South Indian Vaiṣṇavism (13th century) whose works constitute the basic texts for the Southern School among the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja, 218 n

*laya* the weapon of Indra made of thunder-bolt, 269

*Varavara Munī* a celebrated teacher of the Southern School of Śrī Rāmānuja's followers who flourished in the 14th-15th centuries, 218 n

*Varuna* the god of the waters, 269, one of the twelve *Ādityas*, 267 n

*Vasīṣṭha* a *prajāpati* and one of the seven great sages, 255 n

*Vasudeva* father of Kṛṣṇa, 84, 102

*Vasus* a group of eight gods, 268, 279

*Vāk* the goddess presiding over eloquence, regarded as a consort of the Lord, 272

*Vakyakāra* Tanka, an ancient teacher of *Vedānta* and author of *vākyas* or rules of interpretation, 449 n

*Varaspati Mīra* a philosophical writer of the 9th century, 28 n

*Vātsalya* motherly affection and solicitude, 174 n

*Vātsya Varada* a great teacher of *Vaiṣṇādvaita* of the 13th century, 441 n

*Vāyu* the wind god, 196, 297, 298, 378

*Vāsava* Indra, 267

*Vāsuki* king of snakes, 269, 283

*Vāsudeva* Kṛṣṇa as the son of Vasudeva or as one who pervades the universe, *passim*

*Vikarna* a brother of Duryodhana, 6

*vyātīmanām* to those who have attained self conquest, 145 n

*Vitala* one of the seven nether worlds, 282

*vidatīmanām* to those who have known the Self, 145 n

- Vedura* a step brother of Dhrtarāstra, 170 n
- vedyā* form of meditation, with devotion, on the *Brahman*, 203, 217.
- vedyā-vinaya-sampanna* one well endowed with learning and humility, 140 n
- vedvān* one who has knowledge, 82 n
- vidhā* what is enjoined, scriptural mandate, 239 n, 408
- Vinaiś* the mother of Garuḍa, 270
- Vindhyaka* Ganeśa, the son of Śiva, as the remover (of obstacles), 240 n
- vimucyate* gets liberated, 154 n
- Virāṭa* king of Matsya (in modern Rajasthan in and around Jaipur), his daughter married Abhimanyu, 6, 7
- Visate* enters, 467 n
- viśanti* 3rd person indicative plural of *vis*, to enter, 290 n
- Viśiṣṭādvaita* the school of *Vedānta* expounded by Śrī Rāmānuja see, Introduction, 90 n
- viśvayā* excels, 154 n
- Viśravas* the son of Pulastya and the father of Kubera and Rāvaṇa, the Rākṣasa king of Lankā, 268
- viśvarūpa* the form (of the Lord) as the universe, 307 n
- Vīśvas* a group of 10 (or 12) gods, who are specially worshipped at rituals making offerings to the manes, 288
- Vīśvavān* *vyādhān* Him who is the creator of the universe, 75 n
- vidvānmānam parāyaṇam* Him who is the soul of all and the supreme abode, 75 n
- Vīṣṇu* lit. He who pervades (everything), a name of God, 52 n, 58 104 n, 286
- Vīṣṇucitta* the author of a commentary on *V P*, 252 n
- Vṛṣas* the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, who was himself a descendant of Yadu Kṛṣṇa belonged to this clan, 273
- vṛtta*, *vṛtti* conduct, behaviour, 370 n
- Vedānta* lit., the end or the aim of the *Vedas*, the philosophical part of the scriptural texts, or individual texts thereof, *passim*
- Vedānta Dehika* (1268-1368) a great teacher of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* he is the leader of the Northern School among the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja and the author of many works including *T C* 218 n, 441 n
- vaśikāraka* a variety of *akāṅkṣā* 336 n
- Vaiśyas* the caste of farmers and merchants, *passim*
- Vaiṣṇavas* the worshippers of Viṣṇu 106
- vaiśānara* the 'fire' of digestion, an expiatory rite, 387 n
- vṛtāpatti* an expiatory rite
- Vyāsa* a great sage, reputed to be the editor of the *Vedas*, the author of *M B*, the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, etc., *passim*
- Śakata* literally, a cart, a demon who came in the form of a cart to kill the infant Kṛṣṇa and was broken into bits by Him, 3
- nāyaṇ* capable of being done, 132 n
- nāyān* *vāṭāh* The breeches can be drunk with the help of joined hands, 132 n
- Sankara* an epithet of Śiva, 268
- nama* control of the mind, 254 n  
control of the senses 457 (Śrī Rāmānuja appears to think that *sama* and *dama* can be interchangeably used)
- Sambara* an *Aśura* follower of Hiraṇya-kṣiṇu, the father of Prahlāda, 186 n 187 n
- Śāriraka-sūtras* the *Vedāntasūtras*, 334
- sāstras* authoritative religious works *passim*
- Śikhaṇḍin* a son of Drupada, born a girl, he later underwent a change of sex, 7
- Śiva* the Divine Destroyer, regarded as one of the three members of the Hindu Trinity, the sect of *Śaivas* consider Śiva to be God, while *Vaiṣṇavas*

accord that honour to Viṣṇu, 40 n, 283, 324 n

*Śiśupāla* King of Chedi, a kinsman and enemy of Kṛṣṇa, 303

*Śukra* the preceptor of the *Asuras*, 273

*Śubhya* a leader of the Pāṇḍava army, 6

*Śaunaka* a sage who figures in *Mund Up*, 284 n

*śravaṇa* hearing (the exposition of the scriptures), 66 n

*Śrī* See Note 2, 1 173 n, 180 n, 261, 272, 307, 464 n,

*Śrīdhara* a commentator on *B P* the *Gītā* and other works from the point of view of *Advaita*, 226 n, 252 n

*Śrute* the revealed *Vedas*, *passim*

*Śreṣṭha* a distinguished man, 82

*Śvetaketu* a young student to whom is taught the famous teaching, "That thou art", in *Chānd Up*, 327

*sampravṛṣṭāḥ* those that have entered, 380 n

*samśrūtā* the cycle of repeated births and deaths, *passim*

*Sa-kāraṇāḥ* along with those (rituals) which confer fitness, 310 n

*Saṁjaya* Dhṛtarāṣṭra's charioteer, friend and counsellor, *passim*

*sai-kārya vāda* the theory that the effect is existent (in the cause), 28 n

*sattva* that quality of the *prakṛti* which marks balanced motion and a calm mind receptive of knowledge, *passim*

*sattva samāviṣṭa* one who is imbued with the *sattva*, 435 n

*Satya* the highest of the seven upper worlds, Brahmā the Creator is said to reside there, 214 n

*Sauat Kumāra* one of the four mind born sons of Brahmā the Creator, 172 n

*Senanda* a mind born son of Brahmā, 252 n

*samaḥ* equal, equable, the same, 162

*sarva-karma-phala-tyāga* renunciation of the fruits of all works, 313 n

*Sarvataḥ* everywhere, 284 n

*Sarveśvara* the lord of all beings, 75 n

*sahayajñāḥ* them who have sacrifices associated with them, 74 n

*saha yajñāḥ* along with sacrifices, 74 n

*Sātyaki* See *Yuyudhāna*, 7

*Sādhyas* a class of gods, sometimes said to belong to the *Bhuvanloka*, 288

*Sāma*, *Sāma veda* the third *veda* consisting of hymns meant to be sung particularly at sacrifices where the juice of the *soma* plant is used, *passim*

*Sāmrnasakas* epithets of certain Manus from the eighth, probably based on *Sāvarnā* being the mother of the eighth Manu or of all of them, 255

*siddhas* successful yogins, 269, a class of semidivine beings with wonderful powers, 261, 286-88, 295

*Sugṇa* pleasant sounding *Nakula's* conch, 7

*Sulala* one of the nether worlds, 282

*Sudarśana* the discus of Viṣṇu, 186

*mūḍurācārāḥ* one of exceedingly wicked conduct, 245 n

*Subhadrā* sister of Kṛṣṇa and wife of Arjuna, 6, 7

*Sevā bhaktirupāsītḥ* Service is devotion, worship, 173 n

*Somadatta* a leader of *Duryodhana's* army, 6

*Skanda* the son of Śiva and the generalissimo of the gods, 268

*sthilaprajña* one who is of steady understanding, 67 n

*sthiraṁ* firm (neuter), —*aḥ*, firm (masculine), 156 n

*Smṛitis* sacred texts other than the *Vedas* and of secondary authority, *passim*

*smṛti-sandānaḥ* a succession of memories, continued remembrance, 473 n

*madharma* one's own duty or discipline, 94 n, 461 n

*Śvarga* a celestial world of enjoyments ruled by Indra, *passim*

*svarloka* the world of the gods, 392 n

*Sadyambhuva* 'the offspring of the Self Existent', an epithet of the first Manu who was the first man created by Brahmā the Creator, 255 n

*Hanūmat* minister to Sugriva, the king of monkeys in *Rām*, searching for Sītā the wife of Rāma, abducted by Rāvāṇa, he enters Lankā, where he seizes an opportunity to set it ablaze, he acts as the flag on Arjuna's chariot, 9, 9 n

*Harī* a name of God, and hence of Kṛṣṇa, 168 n, 260, 280, 481.

*harya* an offering or oblation to the gods as distinguished from one to the manes, 242 n

*Hitaṁ* that which is conducive to one's welfare, 473 n

*hitān* (acc pl) things conducive to one's good, 194 n

*hitān* indeed, them, 194 n

*Hṛṣīkeśa* Kṛṣṇa as the lord of the senses or as one full of bliss, sovereignty and energy, *passim*

*hṛṣyati* rejoices, 466 n



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य लब्ध्वा	6	22	159	यथा प्रकाश	13	33	356
य सत्यास	6	2	149	यथा प्रदीप्त	11	29	291
य हि न व्यथय	2	15	26	यथा सर्वगत	13	32	356
यच्चोपहासार्थम्	11	42	298	यथैघासि	4	37	125
यच्चापि सर्व	10	39	273	यदक्षर वेद	8	11	208
यजन्ते सात्त्विका	17	4	412	यदग्रे	18	39	455

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यदा ते मोह	2	52	53	यान्ति देवव्रता	9	25	240
यदादित्यगत	15	12	387	यामिमा पुष्पिता	2	42	46
यदा भूतपृथ	13	30	355	यावत्सजायते	13	26	353
यदा यदा हि	4	7	105	यावदेतान्	1	22	8
यदा विनियत	6	18	157	यावानर्थ उद	2	46	49
यदा सहरते	2	58	56	युक्त कर्मफल	5	12	135
यदा सत्त्वे	14	14	368	युक्ताहार	6	17	157
यदा हि नेन्द्रिया	6	4	150	युञ्जन्नेव	6	15	156
यदि मामप्रति	1	46	12	युधामन्युश्च	1	6	4
यदि ह्यह न	3	23	84	ये चैव सात्त्विका	7	12	184
यदृच्छया च	2	32	39	ये तु धर्म्या	12	20	318
यदृच्छालाभ	4	22	116	ये तु सर्वाणि	12	6	310
यद्यदाचरति	3	21	82	ये त्वक्षर	12	3	308
यद्यद्विभूतिमत्	10	41	274	ये त्वन्यदेवता	9	23	239
यद्यप्येते न	1	38	11	ये त्वेतदभ्य	3	32	92
यद्यहङ्कार	18	59	469	ये मे मत	3	31	91
यया तु धर्म	18	34	452	ये यथा मा	4	11	108
यथा धर्म	18	31	450	ये शास्त्रविधि	17	1	410
यया स्वप्न	18	35	452	येषा त्वन्तगत	7	28	198
यश्शास्त्रविधि	16	23	408	येषामर्थे	1	33	11
यस्त्वात्मरति	3	17	80	ये हि सस्पर्शजा	5	22	143
यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि	3	7	71	योगयुक्तो	5	7	132
यस्मात्क्षर	15	18	392	योगसन्त्यस्त	4	41	127
यस्मान्नोद्विजते	12	15	316	योगस्थ कुरु	2	48	50
यस्य नाहङ्कृतो	18	17	442	योगिनामपि	6	47	172
यस्य सर्वे	4	19	114	योगी युञ्जीत	6	10	154
यस्सर्वत्र	2	57	56	योत्स्यमानान्	1	23	8
यातयाम	17	10	416	यो न हृष्यति	12	17	317
या निशा	2	69	62	योऽन्तस्सुखो	5	24	143

The Stanza	Chap No	Verse No	Page No	The Stanza	Chap No	Verse No	Page No
यो मा पश्यति	6	30	163	विस्तरेणात्मनां	10	18	263
यो मामज	10	3	251	विहाय कामान् य	2	71	63
यो मामेव	15	19	393	वीतरागभय	4	10	107
योऽय योग	6	33	165	वृणीता	10	37	273
यो यो या या	7	21	193	वेदाना	10	22	267
रजसि प्रलय	14	15	368	वेदाविनाशिन	2	21	32
रजस्तमश्च	14	10	366	वेदाह समती	7	26	196
रजो रागात्मक	14	7	363	वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपस्सु	8	28	221
रसोऽहमप्सु	7	8	183	व्यवसायात्मिका	2	41	41
रागद्वेषवियुक्त	2	64	60	व्यामिश्रेणव	3	2	67
रागी कर्मफल	18	27	448	व्यामप्रमादाच्छत	18	75	480
राजन् सस्मृत्य	18	76	481	शक्नोतीहैव	5	23	143
राजविद्या	9	2	223	शनेऽशने	6	25	160
रुद्राणा शङ्कर	10	23	267	शमो दमस्तप	18	42	157
रुद्रादित्या वसवो	11	22	288	शरीर यदवाप्नोति	15	8	384
रूप महत्ते	11	23	288	शरीरवाङ्मनां	18	15	439
लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाण	5	25	144	शुक्लकृष्णे	8	26	220
लेलिह्यसे ग्रममान	11	30	291	शुचौ देशे	6	11	155
लोकेऽस्मिन्	3	3	68	शुभाशुभफलै	9	28	243
लोभ प्रवृत्ति	14	12	367	शौर्य तेजो	18	43	458
वक्तुमर्हसि	10	16	262	श्रद्धया पर्या	17	17	419
वक्त्राणि ते	11	27	290	श्रद्धावान् लभते	4	39	126
वायुर्यमोऽग्नि	11	39	297	श्रद्धावान्	18	71	478
वासासि जीर्णानि	2	22	33	श्रुतविप्रतिपन्ना	2	53	53
विद्याविनय	5	18	140	श्रेयान् द्रव्य	4	33	123
विधिहीन	17	13	418	श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो	5	35	94
विविक्तमेवी	18	52	464	श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो	18	47	461
विषया विनिव	2	59	57	श्रेयो हि ज्ञान	12	12	313
विषयेन्द्रियस	18	38	454	श्रोत्र चक्ष	15	9	385

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श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रिया	4	26	119	सर्गाणा	10	32	270
भ्रशुरान्सुहृद	1	27	10	मर्वकर्मणि मनसा	5	13	136
स एवाय	4	3	101	मवकर्मण्यपि	18	56	468
सङ्करो नरकायैव	1	42	11	मर्वगुह्यतम	18	64	472
सङ्कल्पप्रभावान्	6	24	160	सर्वत पाणि	13	13	342
सन्तुष्टस्सतत	12	14	314	मर्वद्वाराणि	8	12	209
सन्नियम्येन्द्रिय	12	4	308	सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽ	14	11	366
सन्यास कर्मणा	5	1	129	सर्वधर्मान	18	66	474
सन्यास कर्मयोग	5	2	130	सर्वभूतस्थमात्मान	6	29	162
सन्यासस्तु	5	6	132	सर्वभूतस्थित यो	6	31	164
सन्यासस्य महा	18	1	427	सर्वभूतानि	9	7	228
सक्ता कर्मणि	3	25	85	सर्वभूतेषु	18	20	444
सखेति मत्वा	11	41	298	सर्वमेतदृत	10	14	261
स घोषो	1	19	5	सर्वयोनिषु	14	4	361
सतत कीर्तयन्तो	9	14	232	सर्वस्य चाह	15	15	388
स तथा श्रद्धया	7	22	194	सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्मा	4	27	119
सत्कारमान	17	18	420	सर्वन्द्रियगुण	13	14	343
सत्त्व रजस्तम	14	5	361	सहज कर्म	18	48	462
सत्त्व सुखे	14	9	365	सह यज्ञं प्रजा	3	10	74
सत्त्वात्सजायते	14	17	369	सहस्रयुग	8	17	213
सत्त्वानुरूपा	17	3	412	साधिभूताधि	7	30	199
सदृश चेष्टते	3	33	93	साख्ययोगौ	5	4	131
सद्भावे साधुभावे	17	26	424	सिद्धि प्राप्तो	18	50	464
सम कायशिरो	6	13	155	सीदन्ति मम	1	29	10
सम पश्यन् हि	13	28	353	सुख त्विदानी	18	36	453
सम सर्वेषु	13	27	353	सुखदुखे समे	2	38	42
समदुःखसुखः	14	24	373	सुखमात्यन्तिक	6	21	158
समश्शत्रौ च	12	18	317	सुदुर्दर्शमिद	11	52	303
समोऽह सर्वभूतेषु	9	29	244	सुहृन्मित्रारि	6	9	153

The Stanza	Chap No	Verse No	Page No	The Stanza	Chap No	Verse No	Page No
स्थाने हृषीकेश	11	36	294	स्वयमेवात्मना	10	15	262
स्थितप्रज्ञस्य	2	54	54	स्वे स्वे कर्मणि	18	45	460
स्पर्शान् कृत्वा	5	27	145	हन्त ते	10	19	264
स्वधर्ममपि	2	31	38	हतो वा प्रा	2	37	41
स्वभावजेन	18	60	470	हृषीकेश तदा	1	21	8

## VARIANT READINGS

In the footnotes a few variant readings of the text of the *Gītā* have been noticed. It will be noted that the readings of Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Śaṅkara differ occasionally. The readings adopted by Śrī Madhva are given in the Kumbakonam edition of the *M. B.* edited by T. R. Krishnacharya. *T. C.* notices many variations in the text, particularly those adopted by Yādavaprakāśa. It also quotes a few additional stanzas accepted by this teacher.

The following sections are listed for facility of reference.

### Chapter I

- 8. 'Saunūdattis' (M)
- 10. See Note 12 and a detailed discussion in *T. C.*
- 18. 'śaṅkham' (M)
- 19. '(a)pyanunādavan' (R, acc. to *T. C.*)
- 30. 'śravate' (M)

### Chapter II

- 5. 'charitum' (R variant in some mss.)
- 25. In M, 'evam' and 'enam' exchange places.
- 33. 'Inam' and 'dharmaṇam' are transposed in some mss. of R.
- 38. 'Nhiya' (M)

### Chapter III

- 10. 'Sahavajñāh' (S, Y and M)
- 36. See Note 155

Between 37 and 38 *T. C.* under XI 26-7 gives five stanzas as accepted by the followers of Y.

"Arjuna uvāca

- 1. Bhavatvesa katham Kṛṣṇa katham<sup>2</sup>caisa vivardhate  
Kimātmakam kimāchārastanman ācakṣva prachatah

Bhagavānuvāca

- 2. Eṣa sūksamah paraśśatrurdehināmīndriyaissaha  
Sukham tatra ivāsino mohayan Pārtha tiṣṭhati

- 3 Kāmakrodhamayo ghorasatambhaharṣasaniudbhavaḥ  
Ahaṅkāro'bhimānātmā dustaraḥ pāpakarmabhīḥ.
- 4 Harṣamasva nivartvāisa śokamasya dadāti ca  
Bhayaṁ cāśya karoti esa mohayaścha muhurmuḥuḥ
- 5 Sa esa kulasaḥ ksudraśchhidrāpekṣi Dhanañjaya  
Rajahpravartito mohānmānusāñāmupadravaḥ "

T C, comments that God alone knows whether these stanzas form part of the *Gītā*. But they have not been accepted by previous commentators and are unknown in the texts used for learning the verses.

#### Chapter IV

- 39 'Matparaḥ' (M)

#### Chapter V

- 5 See Note 222
- 21 'Yatrukham' (S & M)
- 26 See Note 256

#### Chapter VI

- 7 'Parātmāsu samā matih' for 'Paramātmā samahitaḥ' (Bhāskara)
- 9 See Note 280
- 11 'Chelājuna' (M)
- 13 See Note 286
- 21 See Note 294
- 28 'Yuñjannevaṁ' (Ś)
- 41 'Puṇyākṛtāṅllokān' (M)

#### Chapter VII

- 18 See Note 355

#### Chapter VIII

- 16 'Ābrahmabhavanāt' (Y)

#### Chapter IX

- 18 See Note 437

## Chapter X :

- 7 ' avikampena ' (Ś & M)  
 17 ' Yogin ' (Ś & M)  
 42 ' jñātena ' (Ś & M)

## Chapter XI

- 8 ' Śakyase ' (M).  
 15 Does R read ' *dīptān* ' ?  
 26 ' Amī cha tvām ' (Ś)  
 28. After 27, Y reads the following 4 stanzas, according to T C

1 Nānārūpair puruṣair vadhyamānā viśanti te vaktram  
 achintyarūpam

Yaudhisṭhīrā Dhārtarāstrāśca yodhā śāstraiḥ kṛtā  
 vividhaisarva eva

2 Divyāni karmāṇi tavādbhutāni pūrvāṇi pūrve'pi śrayas  
 stuvanti

Nānyo'sti kartā jagatastvameko dhātā vidhātā ca  
 vibhū bhavaśca

3 Tavādbhutam kim nu bhaved asahyam kim vā śakyam  
 parataḥ kīrtayisyē

Kartāsi lokasya yatas svayam vibho tvattas sarvam  
 tvayi sarvam tvameva

4 Atyādbhutam karma na duskaram te karṇamānam  
 na ca vidyate te

Na te guṇānāḥ parimāṇam asti na tejaso nāpi balasya  
 nardhadeḥ

Nārāyaṇārya is also said to read 2-4

- 38 After the first line of this stanza, 2 lines are read by Y  
 Anādimān apratimaprabhāvassarve śva.sarva mahāvi-  
 bhūtiḥ

Na hi tvadanyaḥ kaśchidastiha deva lokatraye dr̥ṣate'-  
 cintyakarmā

- 41 ' tavedam ' (Ś)

## Chapter XIII

1. The following is added as Stanza 1 in M B (Kumbakonam edition).



'Arjuna uvāca'

Prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva kṣetrāṁ kṣetrājñaṁ eva ca.

Itad veditum iच्छāmi jñānam jñeyam ca Kṛṣṇa

3 'yataśca tat' (T C. under XVIII 66)

4 'vināśitam' (M)

11. 'darśanam' (Ś)

17 'dṣṭitam' (M B variant)

20 'Karaṇa' (Ś)

23 'enam' (M)

RG 65.1  
- 485.

#### Chapter XIV

12 'lobhapravṛttir-' (T C under XVIII 66)

18 'vṛtta' (Ś)

#### Chapter XV

3 'sampravīṣṭaḥ' (M)

4 See Note 745

#### Chapter XVI

2 'alolutvam' (M B.),

8. 'akīñcit' (See T C), 'haitukam' (M B. & variant of Ś)

9 'ahitāḥ' (Ś)

#### Chapter XVII

27 'tadartho'yaṁ' (M).

#### Chapter XVIII

14 'vividhāśca' (Ś)

22. 'ahaitukam' (M B.)

25. 'anaspekṣya' (Ś)

42. 'brahma' (M B)

54 'hr̥ṣyati' (noticed by Ś)

57 'apāśritya' (Ś)

78. 'yogīśvaraḥ' (M)



*Note* —In most cases where R reads differently from Ś, M seems to agree with Ś, as M B. prints the Ś-text without noting any variant. In a few cases, as in regard to XVIII. 14 and 57, R and M agree.